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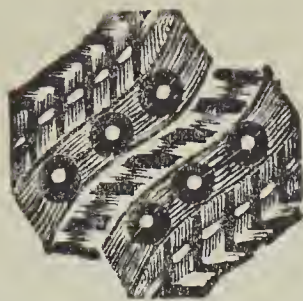
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CLASSICAL

THE HISTORY OF HERODOTUS
TRANSLATED BY GEORGE RAWLINSON
EDITED BY E. H. BLAKENEY, M.A.
IN 2 VOLS. VOL. I

HERODOTUS, born about 484 B.C. at Halicarnassus. Travelled extensively in Greece and in Macedon, Thrace, Persia, and Palestine. In 457 was living at Samos, but about 447 went to Athens. Assisted in the foundation of Thurii, of which he became a citizen, and died there about 425 B.C.

THE HISTORY OF HERODOTUS



VOLUME ONE

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE accompanying translation of Herodotus was first issued in 1858, and since that date has had no serious rival. Rawlinson's *Herodotus*—like Jowett's *Plato*, Jebb's *Sophocles*, and Butcher and Lang's *Odyssey*—is become well-nigh an English classic. Up to the present time, however, its price has been practically prohibitive. In its original form it will be valued for many years to come as a great storehouse of information on all the innumerable questions and problems that must inevitably arise when dealing with an author like Herodotus. The bulk of this information is contained in elaborate essays and appendices—full of instruction, no doubt, for the trained scholar, but quite useless (and encumbering) for the “general reader.”

In the present reprint all these essays have been omitted; the notes have been cut down unsparingly; and the Introduction (on the Life and Writings of Herodotus), which, in the large edition, extends to nearly one hundred and twenty pages, has been reduced to about twenty.

Notwithstanding, it is hoped that, in its present shape, Rawlinson's *Herodotus* will prove a source of pleasure to many who have hitherto been deterred from attacking the four formidable volumes of which the original work consisted.

The footnotes are sufficient to clear up all the main difficulties, and only a good classical atlas is needed to make the narrative “live” for English readers to-day.

The additions to the footnotes which I have ventured to make are enclosed in square brackets. In some dozen places or so, I have silently corrected a slip, or some statement which later researches have rendered inaccurate or doubtful, and I have occasionally inserted a special note on some point of interest

The History of Herodotus

(e.g., on 'Babylon,' 'The Battle of Marathon'); but, with these exceptions, the reader may feel secure that he has before him Rawlinson's own words. I have not even replaced *Jupiter* by *Zeus*, or *Juno* by *Hêrê* (and the like), though the substitution of a Latin nomenclature for the names of Greek deities is an indefensible practice.

E. H. BLAKENEY,

THE KING'S SCHOOL, ELY,
December 1909.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE ON THE TRANSLATOR

George Rawlinson (brother of the famous Sir Henry Rawlinson, the "father of Assyriology"), born 1812, elected Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, 1840; Bampton Lecturer, 1859; made a Canon of Canterbury, 1872; elected Camden Professor of Ancient History, Oxford, 1861; resigned, 1889; died, 1902, aged 90.

Chief works:—

1. *The History of Herodotus*, in 4 vols., 1858; 4th edition, 1880.
2. *The Seven Great Monarchies of the Ancient East*, 1862-1881.
3. *Commentary on Exodus* ("Speaker's Commentary").
4. *The History of Phœnicia*, 1889.

[Original Dedication, 1858]

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE, M.P.,
ETC. ETC. ETC.,
WHO, AMID THE CARES OF PUBLIC LIFE,
HAS CONTINUED TO FEEL AND SHOW
AN INTEREST IN CLASSICAL STUDIES,
THIS WORK IS INSCRIBED,
AS A TOKEN OF WARM REGARD,
BY THE AUTHOR.

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INTRODUCTION

THE time at which Herodotus lived and wrote may be determined within certain limits from his History. On the one hand it appears that he conversed with at least one person who had been an eye-witness of some of the great events of the Persian war; on the other, that he outlived the commencement of the Peloponnesian struggle, and was acquainted with several circumstances which happened in the earlier portion of it. He must therefore have flourished in the fifth century B.C., and must have written portions of his history at least as late as B.C. 430. His birth would thus fall naturally into the earlier portion of the century, and he would have belonged to the generation which came next in succession to that of the conquerors of Salamis.

It may be concluded that Herodotus was born in or about the year B.C. 484. Concerning the birthplace of the historian no reasonable doubt has ever been entertained either in ancient or modern times. He belonged to the town of Halicarnassus, a Dorian colony in Asia Minor. The all but universal testimony of ancient writers, the harmony of their witness with the attention given to Halicarnassus and its affairs in the history, and the epitaph which appears to have been engraved upon the historian's tomb at Thurium, form a body of proof the weight of which is irresistible.

Of the parents and family of Herodotus but little can be said to be known. His parents' names are given as Lyxes and Dryio (or Rhoio), and he doubtless belonged to one of the wealthy and noble families of the place.

The education of Herodotus is to be judged of from his work. No particulars of it have come down to us. Herodotus, it may, however, be supposed, followed the course common in later times—attended the grammar-school where he learnt to read

and write, frequented the palæstra where he went through the exercises, and received instruction from the professional harper or flute-player, who conveyed to him the rudiments of music, But these things formed a very slight part of that education, which was necessary to place a Greek of the upper ranks on a level, intellectually, with those who in Athens and elsewhere gave the tone to society, and were regarded as finished gentlemen. A knowledge of literature, and especially of poetry—above all an intimate acquaintance with the *classic* writings of Homer, was the one great requisite; to which might be added a familiarity with philosophical systems, and a certain amount of rhetorical dexterity.

Herodotus, as his writings show, was most thoroughly accomplished in the first and most important of these three things. He has drunk at the Homeric cistern till his whole being is impregnated with the influence thence derived. In the scheme and plan of his work, in the arrangement and order of its parts, in the tone and character of the thoughts, in ten thousand little expressions and words, the Homeric student appears; and it is manifest that the two great poems of ancient Greece are at least as familiar to him as Shakspeare to the modern educated Englishman. Nor has this intimate knowledge been gained by the sacrifice of other reading. There is scarcely a poet of any eminence anterior to his day with whose works he has not shown himself acquainted. Prose composition had but commenced a very short time before the date of his history. Yet even here we find an acquaintance indicated with a number of writers, seldom distinctly named, but the contents of whose works are well known and familiarly dealt with. It may be questioned whether there was a single work of importance in the whole range of Greek literature accessible to him, with the contents of which he was not fairly acquainted.

Such an amount of literary knowledge implies a prolonged and careful self-education, and is the more remarkable in the case of one whose active and inquisitive turn of mind seems to have led him at an early age to engage in travels, the extent of which, combined with their leisurely character, clearly shows that a long term of years must have been so occupied. The quantum of travel has indeed been generally exaggerated; but after every deduction is made that judicious criticism suggests as proper, there still remains, in the distance between the extreme limits reached, and in the fulness of the information

gained, unmistakable evidence of a vast amount of time spent in the occupation. Herodotus undoubtedly visited Babylon, Ardericca near Susa, the remoter parts of Egypt, Scythia, Colchis, Thrace, Cyréné, Zante, Dodona, and Magna Græcia—thus covering with his travels a space of thirty-one degrees of longitude (above 1700 miles) from east to west, and of twenty-four of latitude (1660 miles) from north to south. Within these limits moreover his knowledge is for the most part close and accurate. He has not merely paid a hasty visit to the countries, but has examined them leisurely, and is familiar with their scenery, their cities small and large, their various wonders, their temples and other buildings, and with the manners and customs of their inhabitants. The fulness and minuteness of his information is even more remarkable than its wide range, though it has attracted less observation.

If anything is certain with respect to the events of our author's career, it is that his home during the first half of his life was in Asia Minor, during the last in Magna Græcia. It is clear that his visit to Egypt, with which some of his other journeys are necessarily connected, took place after the revolt of Inarus (B.C. 460); for he states that he saw the skulls of those who were slain in the great battle of Papremis by which Inarus established himself; and yet it could not have been long after, or he would scarcely have been received with so much cordiality, and allowed such free access to the Egyptian temples and records. There is every reason to conclude that his visit fell within the period—six years, from B.C. 460 to B.C. 455, inclusively—during which the Athenian armies were in possession of the country, when gratitude to their deliverers would have led the Egyptians to receive any Greek who visited them with open arms, and to treat him with a friendliness and familiarity very unlike their ordinary jealousy of foreigners. His Egyptian travels would thus fall between his twenty-fourth and his twenty-ninth year.

Suidas relates that he was forced to fly from Halicarnassus to Samos by the tyranny of Lygdamis, the grandson of Artemisia, who had put his uncle (or cousin) Panyasis to death; that in Samos he adopted the Ionic dialect, and wrote his history; that after a time he returned and took the lead in an insurrection whereby Halicarnassus obtained her freedom, and Lygdamis was driven out; that then, finding himself disliked by the other citizens, he quitted his country, and joined in the

Athenian colonisation of Thurium, at which place he died and was buried.

Herodotus probably continued to reside at Halicarnassus taking long journeys for the purpose of historical and geographical inquiry, till towards the year B.C. 447, when, being about thirty-seven years of age, and having brought his work to a certain degree of completeness, though one far short of that which it reached finally, he removed to Greece Proper, and took up his abode at Athens. Halicarnassus, it would appear, had shortly before cast off her tyrants and joined the Athenian confederacy, so that the young author would be welcomed for his country's sake no less than for his own. It was in the year B.C. 446, if we may believe Eusebius, that a decree passed the Athenian assembly, whereby a reward was assigned to Herodotus on account of his great historical work, which he had read publicly to the Athenians.

It is not difficult to imagine the reasons which may have induced our author, in spite of the fascinations of its society, to quit Athens, and become a settler in one of her colonial dependencies. At Athens he could have no citizenship; and to the Greek not bent on money-making, or absorbed in philosophy to be without political rights, to have no share in what formed the daily life and occupied the constant thoughts of all around him, was intolerable. "Man is not a man unless he is a citizen," said Aristotle; and the feeling thus expressed was common to the Greek nation. Besides, Athens, like every capital, was an expensive place to live in; and the wealth which had made a figure at Halicarnassus would, even if it were not dissipated, have scarcely given a living there. The acceptance by Herodotus of a sum of money from the Athenian people would seem to indicate that his means were now low. They may have been exhausted by the cost of his long journeys, or have suffered from his leaving Halicarnassus. At any rate his circumstance may well have been such as to lead him gladly to embrace the invitation which Athens now offered to adventurers from all parts of Greece, whereby he would acquire at her hands a parcel of land (*κληρον*), which would place him above want, and a new right of citizenship. Accordingly, in the year B.C. 443, when he had just passed his fortieth year, Herodotus, according to the unanimous testimony of ancient writers, joined the colonists whom Pericles was now sending out to Italy, and became one of the first settlers at Thurium.

At Thurium Herodotus would seem to have devoted himself almost entirely to the elaboration of his work.

At the same time he no doubt composed that separate work the existence of which it has been the fashion of late years to deny—his *History of Assyria*. With these literary labours in hand, it is no wonder if Herodotus, having reached the period of middle life, when the fatigues of travel begin to be more sensibly felt, and being moreover entangled in somewhat difficult domestic politics, laid aside his wandering habits, and was contented to remain at Thurium without even exploring to any great extent the countries to which his new position gave him an easy access. There is no trace of his having journeyed further during these years than the neighbouring towns of Metapontum and Crotona, except in a single instance. He must have paid a visit to Athens at least as late as B.C. 436, and probably some years later; for he saw the magnificent Propylæa, one of the greatest of the constructions of Pericles, which was not commenced till B.C. 436, nor finished till five years afterwards.

The state of Thurium, while it was the abode of Herodotus, appears to have been one of perpetual trouble and disquiet. Soon afterwards a war broke out between the Thurians and the people of Tarentum, which was carried on both by land and sea, with varied success, and which probably continued during a space of several years.

It is uncertain whether Herodotus lived to see all these vicissitudes. The place and time of his death are matters of controversy. The work of Herodotus, therefore, contains no sign that he outlived his sixtieth year, and perhaps it may be said that the balance of evidence is in favour of his having died at Thurium when he was about sixty. He would thus have escaped the troubles which afflicted his adopted country during the later portion of the Peloponnesian war, and have been spared the pain of seeing the state of which he was a citizen enrol herself among the enemies of his loved and admired Athens.

The merits of Herodotus *as a writer* have never been questioned. Those who make the lowest estimate of his qualifications as an historian, are profuse in their acknowledgments of his beauties of composition and style, by which they consider that other commentators upon his work have been unduly biassed in his favour, and led to overrate his historical accuracy.

Scarcely a dissentient voice is to be found on this point among critical authorities, whether ancient or modern, who all agree in upholding our author as a model of his own peculiar order of composition. In the concluding portion of this notice an endeavour will be made to point out the special excellencies which justify this universal judgment, while, at the same time, attention will be drawn to certain qualifying statements whereby the most recent of our author's critics has lessened the effect of those general eulogiums which he has passed upon the literary merits of the History.

The most important essential of every literary composition, be it poem, treatise, history, tale, or aught else, is unity. Upon this depends our power of viewing the composition as a whole, and of deriving pleasure from the grasp that we thereby obtain of it, as well as from our perception of the harmony and mutual adaptation of the parts, the progress and conduct of the argument, and the interconnection of the various portions with one another. In few subjects is it so difficult to secure this fundamental groundwork of literary excellence as in history. The unity furnished by mere identity of country or of race falls short of what is required; and hence most general histories are wearisome and deficient in interest. Herodotus, by selecting for the subject of his work a special portion of the history of Greece and confining himself to the narration of events having a bearing, direct or indirect, upon his main topic, has obtained a *unity of action* sufficient to satisfy the most stringent demands of art, equal, indeed, to that which characterises the masterpieces of the imagination. Instead of undertaking the complex and difficult task of writing the history of the Hellenic race during a given period, he sits down with the one (primary) object of faithfully recording the events of a particular war. It is not, as has been generally said, the conflict of races, the antagonism between Europe and Asia, nor even that antagonism in its culminating form—the struggle between Greece and Persia—that he puts before him as his proper subject. Had his views embraced this whole conflict, the Argonautic expedition, the Trojan war, the invasion of Europe by the Teucrians and Mysians, the frequent incursions into Asia of the Cimmerians and the Treres, perhaps even the settlement of the Greeks upon the Asiatic shores, would have claimed their place as integral portions of his narrative. His absolute renunciation of some of these subjects, and his cursory notice or entire omission of

others, indicate that he proposed to himself a far narrower task than the relation of the long course of rivalry between the Asiatic and European races. Nor did he even intend to give us an account of the entire struggle between Greece and Persia. His work, though not finished throughout, is concluded; and its termination with the return of the Greek fleet from Sestos, distinctly shows that it was not his object to trace the entire history of the Græco-Persian struggle, since that struggle continued for thirty years afterwards with scarcely any intermission, until the arrangement known as the Peace of Callias. The real intention of Herodotus was to write the history of the Persian War of Invasion—the contest which commenced with the first expedition of Mardonius, and terminated with the entire discomfiture of the vast fleet and army collected and led against Greece by Xerxes. The portion of his narrative which is anterior to the expedition of Mardonius is of the nature of an introduction, and in this a double design may be traced, the main object of the writer being to give an account of the rise, growth, and progress of the great Empire which had been the antagonist of Greece in the struggle, and his secondary aim to note the previous occasions whereon the two races had been brought into hostile contact. Both these points are connected intimately with the principal object of the history, the one being necessary in order to a correct appreciation of the greatness of the contest and the glory gained by those with whom the victory rested, and the other giving the causes from which the quarrel sprang, and throwing important light on the course of the invasion and the conduct of the invaders.

Had Herodotus confined himself rigidly to these three interconnected heads of narration, the growth of the Persian Empire, the previous hostilities between Greece and Persia, and the actual conduct of the great war, his history would have been meagre and deficient in variety. To avoid this consequence, he takes every opportunity which presents itself of diverging from his main narrative and interweaving with it the vast stores of his varied knowledge, whether historical, geographical, or antiquarian. He thus contrived to set before his countrymen a general picture of the world, of its various races, and of the previous history of those nations which possessed one; thereby giving a grandeur and breadth to his work, which places it in the very first rank of historical compositions. At the same time he took care to diversify his pages by interspersing amid

features than consonant with all that we know from other sources of the leading people of Greece.

Similar fidelity and descriptive power are shown in the picture which he gives us of the Athenians. Like the Spartans, they are independent and freedom-loving, brave and skilful in war, patriotic, and, from the time that they obtain a form of government suited to their wants, fondly attached to it. Like them, too, they are cruel and unsparing towards their adversaries. Unlike them, they are open in their public policy, active and enterprising almost to rashness, impulsive and so changeable in their conduct, vain rather than proud, as troops possessing more dash than firmness, in manners refined and elegant; witty, hospitable, magnificent, fond of display, capable upon occasion of greater moderation and self-denial than most Greeks, and even possessing to a certain extent a generous spirit of Pan-Hellenism. Herodotus, in his admiration of the services rendered by the Athenians to the common cause during the great war, has perhaps over-estimated their pretensions to this last quality; at least it will be found that enlightened self-interest sufficiently explains their conduct during that struggle; and circumstances occurring both before and after it clearly show, that they had no scruples about calling in the Persians against their own countrymen when they expected to gain by it. It ought not to be forgotten in any estimate of the Athenian character, that they *set the example* of seeking aid from Persia against their Hellenic enemies. The circumstances of the time no doubt were trying, and the resolve not to accept aid at the sacrifice of their independence was worthy of their high spirit as a nation; but still the fact remains, that the common enemy first learnt through the invitation of Athens how much she had to hope from the internal quarrels and mutual jealousies of the Greek states.

In depicting other nations besides these three—who play the principal parts in his story—Herodotus has succeeded best with the varieties of barbarism existing upon the outskirts of the civilised world, and least well with those nations among whom refinement and cultivation were at the highest. He seems to have experienced a difficulty in appreciating any other phase of civilisation than that which had been developed by the Greeks. His portraiture of the Egyptians, despite its elaborate finish, is singularly ineffective; while in the case of the Lydians and Babylonians, he scarcely presents us with any distinctive national

features. On the other hand, his pictures of the Scythians, the Thracians, and the wild tribes of Northern Africa, are exceedingly happy, the various forms of barbarism being well contrasted and carefully distinguished from one another.

Among the individuals most effectively portrayed by our author, may be mentioned the four Persian monarchs with whom his narrative is concerned, the Spartan kings, Cleomenes, Leonidas, and Pausanias, the Athenian statesmen and generals, Themistocles and Aristides, the tyrants Periander, Polycrates, Pisistratus, and Histæus the Milesian, Amasis the Egyptian king, and Croesus of Lydia. The various shades of Oriental character and temperament have never been better depicted than in the representation given by Herodotus of the first four Achæmenian kings—Cyrus, the simple, hardy, vigorous mountain chief, endowed with a vast ambition and with great military genius, changing, as his empire enlarged, into the kind and friendly paternal monarch—clement, witty, polite, familiar with his people; Cambyzes, the first form of the Eastern tyrant, inheriting his father's vigour and much of his talent, but spoilt by the circumstances of his birth and breeding, violent, rash, headstrong, incapable of self-restraint, furious at opposition, not only cruel but brutal; Darius, the model Oriental prince, brave, sagacious, astute, great in the arts both of war and peace, the organiser and consolidator as well as the extender of the empire, a man of kind and warm feeling, strongly attached to his friends, clement and even generous towards conquered foes, only severe upon system where the well-being of the empire required an example to be made; and Xerxes, the second and inferior form of the tyrant, weak and puerile as well as cruel and selfish, fickle, timid, licentious, luxurious, easily worked on by courtiers and women, superstitious, vainglorious, destitute of all real magnanimity, only upon occasion ostentatiously parading a generous act when nothing had occurred to ruffle his feelings. Nor is Herodotus less successful in his Hellenic portraits. Themistocles is certainly better drawn by Herodotus than by Thucydides. His political wisdom and clear-sightedness, his wit and ready invention, his fertility in expedients, his strong love of intrigue, his curious combination of patriotism with selfishness, his laxity of principle amounting to positive dishonesty, are all vividly exhibited, and form a whole which is at once more graphic and more complete than the sketch furnished by the Attic writer. The character of Aristides presents a new

point for admiration in the skill with which it is hit off with the fewest possible touches. Magnanimous, disinterestedly patriotic, transcending all his countrymen in excellence of moral character and especially in probity, the simple straightforward statesman comes before us on a single occasion, and his features are portrayed without effort in a few sentences. In painting the Greek tyrants, whom he so much detested, Herodotus has resisted the temptation of representing them all in the darkest colours, and has carefully graduated his portraits from the atrocious cruelties and horrible outrages of Periander to the wise moderation and studied mildness of Pisistratus. The Spartan character, again, is correctly given under its various aspects, Leonidas being the idealised type of perfect Spartan heroism, while Pausanias is a more ordinary specimen of their nobler class of mind, brave and generous, but easily wrought upon by corrupting influences, Cleomenes and Eurybiades being representatives of the two forms of evil to which Spartans were most prone,—Eurybiades weak, timorous, vacillating, and incapable; Cleomenes cruel, false, and violent,—both alike open to take bribes, and ready to sacrifice the interests of the state to their own selfish ends.

To his skill in character-drawing Herodotus adds a power of pathos in which few writers, whether historians or others, have been his equals. The stories of the wife of Intaphernes weeping and lamenting continually at the king's gate, of Psammenitus sitting in the suburb and seeing his daughter employed in servile offices and his son led to death, yet "showing no sign," but bursting into tears when an old friend accosted him and asked an alms; of Lycophron silently and sadly enduring everything rather than hold converse with a father who had slain his mother, and himself suffering for his father's cruelties at the moment when a prosperous career seemed about to open on him, are examples of this excellence within the compass of a single book which it would be difficult to parallel from the entire writings of any other historical author. But the most eminent instance of the merit in question is to be found in the story of Cræsus. It has been well observed that "the volume of popular romance contains few more beautifully told tales than that of the death of Atys;" and the praise might be extended to the whole narrative of the life of Cræsus from the visit of Solon to the scene upon the pyre, which is a masterpiece of pathos, exhibiting tragic power of the highest order.

The same power is exhibited in a less degree in the stories of the siege of Xanthus, of Tomyris, of Œobazus, of Pythius, of Boges, and of Masistes. In the last of these cases, and perhaps in one or two others, the horrible has somewhat too large a share; in all, however, the pathetic is an important and well-developed element.

It has been maintained that Herodotus, though excellent in tragic scenes, was "deficient in the sense of the comic properly so called." His "good stories" and "clever sayings" are thought to be "not only devoid of true wit, but among the most insipid of his anecdotal details." The correctness of this judgment may be questioned, not only on the general ground that tragic and comic power go together, but by an appeal to fact—the *experimentum crucis* in such a case. It is, of course, not to be expected in a grave and serious production like a history, that humorous features should be of frequent occurrence: the author's possession of the quality of humour will be sufficiently shown if even occasionally he diversifies his narrative by anecdotes or remarks of a ludicrous character. Now in the work of Herodotus there are several stories of which the predominant characteristic is the humorous; as, very palpably, the tale of Alcmaëon's visit to the treasury of Cræsus, when, having "clothed himself in a loose tunic, which he made to bag greatly at the waist, and placed upon his feet the widest buskins that he could anywhere find, he followed his guide into the treasure-house," where he "fell to upon a heap of gold-dust, and in the first place packed as much as he could inside his buskins between them and his legs, after which he filled the breast of his tunic quite full of gold, and then sprinkling some among his hair, and taking some likewise in his mouth, came forth from the treasure-house scarcely able to drag his legs along, *like anything rather than a man*, with his mouth crammed full, and his bulk increased every way." The laughter of Cræsus at the sight is echoed by the reader, who has presented to him a most ridiculous image hit off with wonderful effect, and poeticised by the touch of imagination, which regards the distorted form as having lost all semblance of humanity. It would be impossible to deny to Herodotus the possession of a sense of the comic if he had confined himself to this single exhibition of it.

Perhaps the most attractive feature in the whole work of Herodotus—that which prevents us from ever feeling weariness as we follow him through the nine books of his history—is the

wonderful variety in which he deals. Not only historian, but geographer, traveller, naturalist, mythologer, moralist, antiquarian, he leads us from one subject to another,—

From grave to gay, from lively to severe,—

never pursuing his main narrative for any long time without the introduction of some agreeable episodical matter, rarely carrying an episodical digression to such an extent as to be any severe trial to our patience. Even as historian, the respect in which he especially excels other writers is the diversity of his knowledge. Contriving to bring almost the whole known world within the scope of his story, and throwing everywhere a retrospective glance at the earliest beginnings of states and empires, he exhibits before our eyes a sort of panoramic view of history, in which past and present, near and remote, civilised kingdoms and barbarous communities, kings, priests, sages, lawgivers, generals, courtiers, common men, have all their place—a place at once skilfully assigned and properly apportioned to their respective claims on our attention. Blended, moreover, with this profusion of historic matter are sketches of religions, graphic descriptions of countries, elaborate portraiture of the extremes of savage and civilised life, striking moral reflections, curious antiquarian and philosophical disquisitions, legends, anecdotes, criticisms—not all perhaps equally happy, but all serving the purpose of keeping alive the reader's interest, and contributing to the general richness of effect by which the work is characterised. Again, most remarkable is the variety of styles which are assumed, with almost equal success, in the descriptions and anecdotes. The masterly treatment of pathetic subjects, and the occasional indulgence, with good effect, in a comic vein, have been already noticed. Equal power is shown in dealing with such matters as are tragic without being pathetic, as in the legend of Gyges, the story of the death of Cyrus, the description of the self-destruction of Cleomenes, and, above all, in the striking scene which portrays the last moments of Prexaspes. In this, and in his account of the death of Adrastus, Herodotus has, if anywhere, reached the sublime. Where his theme is lower, he has a style peculiarly his own, which seems to come to him without effort, yet which is most difficult of attainment. It is simple without being homely, familiar without being vulgar, lively without being forced or affected. Of this, remarkable and diversified specimens will be found in the history

of the birth and early years of Cyrus, and in the tale—which reads like a story in the Arabian Nights—of the thieves who plundered the treasury of Rhampsinitus. Occasionally he exhibits another power which is exceedingly rare—that, namely, of representing the grotesque. The story of Arion has a touch of this quality, which is more fully displayed in the account of the funeral rites of the Scythian kings. Still more remarkable, and still more important in its bearing on the general effect of his work, is the dramatic power, so largely exhibited in the abundant dialogues and in the occasional set speeches where-with his narrative is adorned, which by their contrast with the ordinary historical form, and their intrinsic excellence generally, tend more perhaps than any other single feature to enliven his pages, and to prevent the weariness which is naturally caused by the uniformity of continued narration.

Another excellence of Herodotus is vivid description, or the power of setting before us graphically and distinctly that which he desires us to see. This faculty however he does not exhibit equally in all subjects. Natural scenery, in common with the ancients generally, he for the most part neglects; and his descriptions of the great works constructed by the labour of man, although elaborate, fail in conveying to the minds of his readers any very distinct impression of their appearance. The power in question is shown chiefly in his accounts of remarkable events or actions, which portions of his narrative have often all the beauty and distinctness of pictures. Gyges in the bed-chamber of Candaules, Arion on the quarter-deck chanting the Orthian, Cleobis and Bito arriving at the temple of Juno, Adrastus delivering himself up to Cræsus, Alcmaëon coming forth from the treasure-house, are pictures of the simplest and most striking kind, presenting to us at a single glance a scene exactly suited to form a subject for a painter. Sometimes, however, the description is more complex and continuous. The charge of the Athenians at Marathon, the various contests and especially the final struggle at Thermopylæ, the conflict in the royal palace at Susa between the Magi and the seven conspirators, the fight between Onesilus and Artybius, the exploits of Artemisia at Salamis, the death of Masistius and the contention for his body, are specimens of excellent description of the more complicated kind, wherein not a single picture, but a succession of pictures, is exhibited before the eyes of the reader. These descriptions possess all the energy, life, and power of

Homeric scenes and battles, and are certainly not surpassed in the compositions of any prose writer.

The most obvious merit of our author, and the last which seems to require special notice, is his simplicity. The natural flow of narrative and sentiment throughout his work, the predominant use of common and familiar words, the avoidance of all meretricious ornament and rhetorical artifice, have often been remarked, and have won the approbation of almost all critics. With Herodotus composition is not an art, but a spontaneous outpouring. He does not cultivate graces of style, or consciously introduce fine passages. He writes as his subject leads him, rising with it, but never transcending the modesty of nature, or approaching to the confines of bombast. Not only are his words simple and common, but the structure of his sentences is of the least complicated kind. He writes, as Aristotle observes, not in laboured periods, but in sentences which have a continuous flow, and which only end when the sense is complete. Hence the wonderful clearness and transparency of his style, which is never involved, never harsh or forced, and which rarely allows the shadow of a doubt to rest upon his meaning.

The same spirit, which thus affects his language and mode of expression, is apparent in the whole tone and conduct of the narrative. Everything is plainly and openly related; there is no affectation of mystery; we are not tantalised by obscure allusions or hints; the author freely and fully admits us to his confidence, is not afraid to mention himself and his own impressions; introduces us to his informants; tells us plainly what he saw and what he heard; allows us to look into his heart, where there is nothing that he needs to hide, and to become sharers alike in his religious sentiments, his political opinions, and his feelings of sympathy or antipathy towards the various persons or races that he is led to mention. Hence the strong personal impression of the writer which we derive from his work, whereby, despite the meagre notices that remain to us of his life, we are made to feel towards him as towards an intimate acquaintance, and to regard ourselves as fully entitled to canvass and discuss all his qualities, moral as well as intellectual. The candour, honesty, amiability, piety, and patriotism of Herodotus, his primitive cast of mind and habits, his ardent curiosity, his strong love of the marvellous, are familiar topics with his commentators, who find his portrait drawn by himself with as much

completeness (albeit unconsciously) in his writings, as those of other literary men have been by their professed biographers. All this is done moreover without the slightest affectation, or undue intrusion of his own thoughts and opinions; it is the mere result of his not thinking about himself, and is as far removed from the ostentatious display of Xenophon as from the studied concealment of Thucydides.

While the language, style, sentiments, and tone of narrative in Herodotus are thus characterised, if we compare him with later writers, by a natural simplicity and freedom from effort, which constitute to a considerable extent the charm of his writing, it is important to observe how greatly in all these respects he is in advance of former prose authors. Justice is not done to his merits unless some attention be given to the history of prose composition before his time, and something like a comparison instituted between him and his predecessors. With Herodotus simplicity never degenerates into baldness, or familiarity into what is rude and coarse. His style is full, free, and flowing, and offers a most agreeable contrast to the stiff conciseness, curt broken sentences, and almost unvaried construction, of previous historians. If we glance our eye over the fragments of the early Greek writers that have come down to our times, we shall be surprised to find how rude and primitive, how tame, bald, and spiritless the productions appear to have been, even of the most celebrated historians anterior to, or contemporary with, our author. A comparison between the style of Herodotus and the style of writing customary in his day would furnish us with a tolerably accurate means of estimating the interval which separated Herodotus, as a writer, from those who had preceded him—an interval so great as to render the style of composition which he invented a sort of new art, and to entitle him to the honourable appellation, which prescription has made indisputably his, of the "Father of History."

EDITORIAL NOTE

BOOKS SUGGESTED FOR THE STUDY OF HERODOTUS

Sayce's ed. of books i.-iii. (but to be used with caution).

Macan's ed. of books iv.-ix. (1892-1908). Admirable; and indispensable for the advanced student.

Bury's *Ancient Greek Historians* (1909) pp. 36-74. A valuable piece of criticism.

Studies in Herodotus, by J. Wells (1923); *Herodotus*, by R. Glover (1924).

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ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS: Barnaby Rich, 1584 (first two Books); Isaac Littlebury, 1709; W. Beloe, 1791, 2nd edition, 1806; with notes from Larcher and Rennell, 1824; P. E. Laurent, from Gaisford's text, 1827; Isaac Taylor, 1829; H. Cary, 1849 (Bohn), and Lubbock's Hundred Books, No. 1; G. Rawlinson, assisted by Sir H. Rawlinson and Sir J. G. Wilkinson, 1858-60; with abridged notes (A. J. Grant), 1897; G. C. Macaulay, 1890; G. Woodruffe Harris, New Classical Library, 1906-7.

THE HISTORY OF HERODOTUS

THE FIRST BOOK, ENTITLED CLIO

THESE are the researches of Herodotus of Halicarnassus,¹ which he publishes, in the hope of thereby preserving from decay the remembrance of what men have done, and of preventing the great and wonderful actions of the Greeks and the Barbarians from losing their due meed of glory; and withal to put on record what were their grounds of feud.

1. According to the Persians best informed in history, the Phœnicians began the quarrel. This people, who had formerly dwelt on the shores of the Erythræan Sea,² having migrated to the Mediterranean and settled in the parts which they now inhabit, began at once, they say, to adventure on long voyages, freighting their vessels with the wares of Egypt and Assyria. They landed at many places on the coast, and among the rest at Argos, which was then pre-eminent above all the states included now under the common name of Hellas.³ Here they exposed their merchandise, and traded with the natives for five or six days; at the end of which time, when almost everything was sold, there came down to the beach a number of women, and among them the daughter of the king, who was, they say, agreeing in this with the Greeks, Io, the child of Inachus. The women were standing by the stern of the ship intent upon their purchases, when the Phœnicians, with a general shout, rushed upon them. The greater part made their escape, but some were seized and carried off. Io herself was among the captives. The Phœnicians put the women on board their vessel, and set

¹ The mention of the author's name and country in the first sentence of his history seems to have been usual in the age in which Herodotus wrote.

² By the Erythræan Sea Herodotus intends, not our Red Sea, which he calls the Arabian Gulf (κόλπος Ἀράβιος), but the Indian Ocean, or rather both the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, which latter he does not consider distinct from the Ocean, being ignorant of its shape.

³ The ancient superiority of Argos is indicated by the position of Agamemnon at the time of the Trojan war (compare Thucyd. i. 9-10), and by the use of the word Argive in Homer for Greek generally. No other name of a single people is used in the same generic way.

sail for Egypt. Thus did Io pass into Egypt, according to the Persian story,¹ which differs widely from the Phœnician: and thus commenced, according to their authors, the series of outrages.

2. At a later period, certain Greeks, with whose name they are unacquainted, but who would probably be Cretans,² made a landing at Tyre, on the Phœnician coast, and bore off the king's daughter, Europé. In this they only retaliated; but afterwards the Greeks, they say, were guilty of a second violence. They manned a ship of war, and sailed to Æa, a city of Colchis, on the river Phasis; from whence, after despatching the rest of the business on which they had come, they carried off Medea, the daughter of the king of the land. The monarch sent a herald into Greece to demand reparation of the wrong, and the restitution of his child; but the Greeks made answer, that having received no reparation of the wrong done them in the seizure of Io the Argive, they should give none in this instance.

3. In the next generation afterwards, according to the same authorities, Alexander the son of Priam, bearing these events in mind, resolved to procure himself a wife out of Greece by violence, fully persuaded, that as the Greeks had not given satisfaction for their outrages, so neither would he be forced to make any for his. Accordingly he made prize of Helen; upon which the Greeks decided that, before resorting to other measures, they would send envoys to reclaim the princess and require reparation of the wrong. Their demands were met by a reference to the violence which had been offered to Medea, and they were asked with what face they could now require satisfaction, when they had formerly rejected all demands for either reparation or restitution addressed to them.³

¹ The name, thus first brought before us in its Asiatic form, may perhaps furnish an astronomical solution for the entire fable; for as the wanderings of the Greek Io have been often compared with the erratic course of the moon in the heavens, passing in succession through all the signs of the zodiac, so do we find that in the ante-Semitic period there was also an identity of name, the Egyptian title of the moon being *Yah*, and the primitive Chaldæan title being represented by a Cuneiform sign, which is phonetically *Ai*, as in modern Turkish.

² Since no other Greeks were thought to have possessed a navy in these early times.

³ Aristophanes in the *Acharnians* (488-494) very wittily parodies the opening of Herodotus's history. Professing to give the causes of the Peloponnesian war, he says:—

—————“ This was nothing,
Smacking too much of our accustomed manner
To give offence. But here, sirs, was the rub:
Some sparks of ours, hot with the grape, had stol'n

4. Hitherto the injuries on either side had been mere acts of common violence; but in what followed the Persians consider that the Greeks were greatly to blame, since before any attack had been made on Europe, they led an army into Asia. Now as for the carrying off of women, it is the deed, they say, of a rogue; but to make a stir about such as are carried off, argues a man a fool. Men of sense care nothing for such women, since it is plain that without their own consent they would never be forced away. The Asiatics, when the Greeks ran off with their women, never troubled themselves about the matter; but the Greeks, for the sake of a single Lacedæmonian girl, collected a vast armament, invaded Asia, and destroyed the kingdom of Priam. Henceforth they ever looked upon the Greeks as their open enemies. For Asia, with all the various tribes of barbarians that inhabit it, is regarded by the Persians as their own; but Europe and the Greek race they look on as distinct and separate.¹

5. Such is the account which the Persians give of these matters.² They trace to the attack upon Troy their ancient enmity towards the Greeks. The Phœnicians, however, as regards Io, vary from the Persian statements. They deny that they used any violence to remove her into Egypt; she herself, they say, having formed an intimacy with the captain, while his vessel lay at Argos, and perceiving herself to be with child, of her own freewill accompanied the Phœnicians on their leaving the shore, to escape the shame of detection and the reproaches of her parents. Whether this latter account be true, or whether the matter happened otherwise, I shall not discuss further. I

A mistress of the game—Simætha named—
 From the Megarians: her doughty townsmen
 (For the deed moved no small extent of anger)
 Reveng'd the affront upon Aspasia's train,
 And bore away a brace of her fair damsels.
 All Greece anon gave note of martial prelude.
 And what the cause of war? marry, three women."

—MITCHELL, p. 70-2.

This is the earliest indication of a knowledge of the work of Herodotus on the part of any other Greek writer.

¹ The claim made by the Persians to the natural lordship of Asia was convenient as furnishing them with pretexts for such wars as it suited their policy to engage in with non-Asiatic nations.

² It is curious to observe the treatment which the Greek myths met with at the hands of foreigners. The Oriental mind, quite unable to appreciate poetry of such a character, stripped the legends bare of all that beautified them, and then treated them, thus vulgarised, as matters of simple history.

shall proceed at once to point out the person who first within my own knowledge inflicted injury on the Greeks, after which I shall go forward with my history, describing equally the greater and the lesser cities. For the cities which were formerly great, have most of them become insignificant; and such as are at present powerful, were weak in the olden time.¹ I shall therefore discourse equally of both, convinced that human happiness never continues long in one stay.

6. Cræsus, son of Alyattes, by birth a Lydian, was lord of all the nations to the west of the river Halys. This stream, which separates Syria² from Paphlagonia, runs with a course from south to north, and finally falls into the Euxine. So far as our knowledge goes, he was the first of the barbarians who had dealings with the Greeks, forcing some of them to become his tributaries, and entering into alliance with others. He conquered the Æolians, Ionians, and Dorians of Asia, and made a treaty with the Lacedæmonians. Up to that time all Greeks had been free. For the Cimmerian attack upon Ionia, which was earlier than Cræsus, was not a conquest of the cities, but only an inroad for plundering.

7. The sovereignty of Lydia, which had belonged to the Heraclides, passed into the family of Cræsus, who were called the Mermnadæ, in the manner which I will now relate. There was a certain king of Sardis, Candaules by name, whom the Greeks called Myrsilus. He was a descendant of Alcæus, son of Hercules. The first king of this dynasty was Agron, son of Ninus, grandson of Belus, and great-grandson of Alcæus; Candaules, son of Myrsus, was the last. The kings who reigned before Agron sprang from Lydus, son of Atys, from whom the people of the land, called previously Meonians, received the name of Lydians. The Heraclides, descended from Hercules and the slave-girl of Jardanus, having been entrusted by these princes with the management of affairs, obtained the kingdom by an oracle. Their rule endured for two and twenty generations of men, a space of five hundred and five years;³ during

¹ Thucydides remarks on the small size to which Mycænæ had dwindled compared with its former power (i. 10).

² By Syria Herodotus here means Cappadocia, the inhabitants of which he calls Syrians (i. 72, and vii. 72), or Cappadocian Syrians (*Συριοὶς Καππαδοκίας* i. 72). Herodotus regards the words Syria and Assyria, Syrians and Assyrians, as in reality the same (vii. 63); in his use of them, however, as ethnic appellatives, he always carefully distinguishes.

³ Herodotus professes to count three generations to the century (ii. 142), thus making the generation 33½ years. In this case the average of the generations is but 23 years.

the whole of which period, from Agron to Candaules, the crown descended in the direct line from father to son.

8. Now it happened that this Candaules was in love with his own wife; and not only so, but thought her the fairest woman in the whole world. This fancy had strange consequences. There was in his body-guard a man whom he specially favoured, Gyges, the son of Dascylus. All affairs of greatest moment were entrusted by Candaules to this person, and to him he was wont to extol the surpassing beauty of his wife. So matters went on for a while. At length, one day, Candaules, who was fated to end ill, thus addressed his follower: "I see thou dost not credit what I tell thee of my lady's loveliness; but come now, since men's ears are less credulous than their eyes, contrive some means whereby thou mayst behold her naked." At this the other loudly exclaimed, saying, "What most unwise speech is this, master, which thou hast uttered? Wouldst thou have me behold my mistress when she is naked? Bethink thee that a woman, with her clothes, puts off her bashfulness. Our fathers, in time past, distinguished right and wrong plainly enough, and it is our wisdom to submit to be taught by them. There is an old saying, 'Let each look on his own.' I hold thy wife for the fairest of all womankind. Only, I beseech thee, ask me not to do wickedly."

9. Gyges thus endeavoured to decline the king's proposal, trembling lest some dreadful evil should befall him through it. But the king replied to him, "Courage, friend; suspect me not of the design to prove thee by this discourse; nor dread thy mistress, lest mischief befall thee at her hands. Be sure I will so manage that she shall not even know that thou hast looked upon her. I will place thee behind the open door of the chamber in which we sleep. When I enter to go to rest she will follow me. There stands a chair close to the entrance, on which she will lay her clothes one by one as she takes them off. Thou wilt be able thus at thy leisure to peruse her person. Then, when she is moving from the chair toward the bed, and her back is turned on thee, be it thy care that she see thee not as thou passest through the doorway."

10. Gyges, unable to escape, could but declare his readiness. Then Candaules, when bedtime came, led Gyges into his sleeping-chamber, and a moment after the queen followed. She entered, and laid her garments on the chair, and Gyges gazed on her. After a while she moved toward the bed, and her back

being then turned, he glided stealthily from the apartment. As he was passing out, however, she saw him, and instantly divining what had happened, she neither screamed as her shame impelled her, nor even appeared to have noticed aught, purposing to take vengeance upon the husband who had so affronted her. For among the Lydians, and indeed among the barbarians generally, it is reckoned a deep disgrace, even to a man, to be seen naked.¹

11. No sound or sign of intelligence escaped her at the time. But in the morning, as soon as day broke, she hastened to choose from among her retinue, such as she knew to be most faithful to her, and preparing them for what was to ensue, summoned Gyges into her presence. Now it had often happened before that the queen had desired to confer with him, and he was accustomed to come to her at her call. He therefore obeyed the summons, not suspecting that she knew aught of what had occurred. Then she addressed these words to him: "Take thy choice, Gyges, of two courses which are open to thee. Slay Candaules, and thereby become my lord, and obtain the Lydian throne, or die this moment in his room. So wilt thou not again, obeying all behests of thy master, behold what is not lawful for thee. It must needs be, that either he perish by whose counsel this thing was done, or thou, who sawest me naked, and so didst break our usages." At these words Gyges stood awhile in mute astonishment; recovering after a time, he earnestly besought the queen that she would not compel him to so hard a choice. But finding he implored in vain, and that necessity was indeed laid on him to kill or to be killed, he made choice of life for himself, and replied by this inquiry: "If it must be so, and thou compellest me against my will to put my lord to death, come, let me hear how thou wilt have me set on him." "Let him be attacked," she answered, "on that spot where I was by him shown naked to you, and let the assault be made when he is asleep."

12. All was then prepared for the attack, and when night fell, Gyges, seeing that he had no retreat or escape, but must absolutely either slay Candaules, or himself be slain, followed his mistress into the sleeping-room. She placed a dagger in his hand, and hid him carefully behind the self-same door. Then

¹ The contrast between the feelings of the Greeks and the barbarians on this point is noted by Thucydides (i. 6), where we learn that the exhibition of the naked person was recent, even with the Greeks.

Gyges, when the king was fallen asleep, entered privily into the chamber and struck him dead. Thus did the wife and kingdom of Candaules pass into the possession of Gyges, of whom Archilochus the Parian, who lived about the same time,¹ made mention in a poem written in Iambic trimeter verse.

13. Gyges was afterwards confirmed in the possession of the throne by an answer of the Delphic oracle. Enraged at the murder of their king, the people flew to arms, but after a while the partisans of Gyges came to terms with them, and it was agreed that if the Delphic oracle declared him king of the Lydians, he should reign; if otherwise, he should yield the throne to the Heraclides. As the oracle was given in his favour he became king. The Pythoness, however, added that, in the fifth generation from Gyges, vengeance should come for the Heraclides; a prophecy of which neither the Lydians nor their princes took any account till it was fulfilled. Such was the way in which the Mermnadæ deposed the Heraclides, and themselves obtained the sovereignty.

14. When Gyges was established on the throne, he sent no small presents to Delphi, as his many silver offerings at the Delphic shrine testify. Besides this silver he gave a vast number of vessels of gold, among which the most worthy of mention are the goblets, six in number, and weighing altogether thirty talents, which stand in the Corinthian treasury, dedicated by him. I call it the Corinthian treasury, though in strictness of speech it is the treasury not of the whole Corinthian people, but of Cypselus, son of Eetion. Excepting Midas, son of Gordias,² king of Phrygia, Gyges was the first of the barbarians whom we know to have sent offerings to Delphi. Midas dedicated the royal throne whereon he was accustomed to sit and administer justice, an object well worth looking at. It lies in the same place as the goblets presented by Gyges. The Delphians call the whole of the silver and the gold which Gyges dedicated, after the name of the donor, Gygian.

As soon as Gyges was king he made an inroad on Miletus and Smyrna, and took the city of Colophon. Afterwards, however,

¹ There are strong grounds for believing that Archilochus was later than Callinus, who is proved by Grote to have written after the great Cimmerian invasion in the reign of Ardys. But there is nothing to show at what time in the reign of Ardys this invasion happened. Archilochus may have been contemporary both with Gyges and Ardys. The Cimmerian invasion may have been early in the reign of the latter prince, say B.C. 675.

² Every Phrygian king mentioned in ancient history is either Midas, son of Gordias, or Gordias, son of Midas.

though he reigned eight and thirty years, he did not perform a single noble exploit. I shall therefore make no further mention of him, but pass on to his son and successor in the kingdom, Ardys.

15. Ardys took Priêné and made war upon Miletus. In his reign the Cimmerians, driven from their homes by the nomades of Scythia, entered Asia and captured Sardis, all but the citadel. He reigned forty-nine years, and was succeeded by his son, Sadyattes, who reigned twelve years. At his death his son Alyattes mounted the throne.

16. This prince waged war with the Medes under Cyaxares, the grandson of Deïoces,¹ drove the Cimmerians out of Asia, conquered Smyrna, the Colophonian colony,² and invaded Clazomenæ. From this last contest he did not come off as he could have wished, but met with a sore defeat; still, however, in the course of his reign, he performed other actions very worthy of note, of which I will now proceed to give an account.

17. Inheriting from his father a war with the Milesians, he pressed the siege against the city by attacking it in the following manner. When the harvest was ripe on the ground he marched his army into Milesia to the sound of pipes and harps, and flutes masculine and feminine.³ The buildings that were scattered over the country he neither pulled down nor burnt, nor did he even tear away the doors, but left them standing as they were. He cut down, however, and utterly destroyed all the trees and all the corn throughout the land, and then returned to his own dominions. It was idle for his army to sit down before the place, as the Milesians were masters of the sea. The reason that he did not demolish their buildings was, that the inhabitants might be tempted to use them as homesteads from which to go forth to sow and till their lands; and so each time that he invaded the country he might find something to plunder.

18. In this way he carried on the war with the Milesians for eleven years, in the course of which he inflicted on them two terrible blows; one in their own country in the district of Lime-neium, the other in the plain of the Mæander. During six of these eleven years, Sadyattes, the son of Ardys, who first lighted

¹ Vide infra, chaps. 73-4.

² Vide infra, ch. 150.

³ Aulus Gellius understood the "male and female flutes," as flutes played by men, and flutes played by women. But it is more probable that flutes of different tones or pitches are intended. The flute, the pitch of which was lower, would be called *male*; the more treble or shrill-sounding one would be the *female*.

the flames of this war, was king of Lydia, and made the incursions. Only the five following years belong to the reign of Alyattes, son of Sadyattes, who (as I said before) inheriting the war from his father, applied himself to it unremittingly. The Milesians throughout the contest received no help at all from any of the Ionians, excepting those of Chios, who lent them troops in requital of a like service rendered them in former times, the Milesians having fought on the side of the Chians during the whole of the war between them and the people of Erythræ.

19. It was in the twelfth year of the war that the following mischance occurred from the firing of the harvest-fields. Scarcely had the corn been set a-light by the soldiers when a violent wind carried the flames against the temple of Minerva Assesia, which caught fire and was burnt to the ground. At the time no one made any account of the circumstance; but afterwards, on the return of the army to Sardis, Alyattes fell sick. His illness continued, whereupon, either advised thereto by some friend, or perchance himself conceiving the idea, he sent messengers to Delphi to inquire of the god concerning his malady. On their arrival the Pythoness declared that no answer should be given them until they had rebuilt the temple of Minerva, burnt by the Lydians at Assêsus in Miliesia.

20. Thus much I know from information given me by the Delphians; the remainder of the story the Milesians add.

The answer made by the oracle came to the ears of Periander, son of Cypselus, who was a very close friend to Thrasybulus, tyrant of Miletus at that period. He instantly despatched a messenger to report the oracle to him, in order that Thrasybulus, forewarned of its tenor, might the better adapt his measures to the posture of affairs.

21. Alyattes, the moment that the words of the oracle were reported to him, sent a herald to Miletus in hopes of concluding a truce with Thrasybulus and the Milesians for such a time as was needed to rebuild the temple. The herald went upon his way; but meantime Thrasybulus had been apprised of everything; and conjecturing what Alyattes would do, he contrived this artifice. He had all the corn that was in the city, whether belonging to himself or to private persons, brought into the market-place, and issued an order that the Milesians should hold themselves in readiness, and, when he gave the signal, should, one and all, fall to drinking and revelry.

22. The purpose for which he gave these orders was the fol-

lowing. He hoped that the Sardinian herald, seeing so great store of corn upon the ground, and all the city given up to festivity, would inform Alyattes of it, which fell out as he anticipated. The herald observed the whole, and when he had delivered his message, went back to Sardis. This circumstance alone, as I gather, brought about the peace which ensued. Alyattes, who had hoped that there was now a great scarcity of corn in Miletus, and that the people were worn down to the last pitch of suffering, when he heard from the herald on his return from Miletus tidings so contrary to those he had expected, made a treaty with the enemy by which the two nations became close friends and allies. He then built at Assêsus two temples to Minerva instead of one,¹ and shortly after recovered from his malady. Such were the chief circumstances of the war which Alyattes waged with Thrasybulus and the Milesians.

23. This Periander, who apprised Thrasybulus of the oracle, was son of Cypselus, and tyrant of Corinth.² In his time a very wonderful thing is said to have happened. The Corinthians and the Lesbians agree in their account of the matter. They relate that Arion of Methymna, who as a player on the harp, was second to no man living at that time, and who was, so far as we know, the first to invent the dithyrambic measure,³ to give it its name, and to recite in it at Corinth, was carried to Tænarum on the back of a dolphin.

24. He had lived for many years at the court of Periander, when a longing came upon him to sail across to Italy and Sicily. Having made rich profits in those parts, he wanted to recross the seas to Corinth. He therefore hired a vessel, the crew of which were Corinthians, thinking that there was no people in whom he could more safely confide; and, going on board, he

¹ The feeling that restitution should be twofold, when made to the gods, was a feature of the religion of Rome. It was not recognised in Greece.

² Bähr says (Not. ad loc.), Periander was tyrant in the *ancient* sense of the word, in which it is simply equivalent to the Latin "rex" and the Greek *ἄναξ*, or *βασιλεὺς*; because he inherited the crown from his father Cypselus. But it would rather seem that the word bears here its usual sense of a king who rules with a usurped and unconstitutional authority.

³ The invention of the Dithyramb, or Cyclic chorus, was ascribed to Arion, not only by Herodotus, but also by Aristotle, by Hellanicus, by Dicæarchus, and, implicitly, by Pindar, who said it was invented at Corinth. Perhaps it is best to conclude with a recent writer that Arion did not invent, but only improved the dithyramb. The dithyramb was originally a mere hymn in honour of Bacchus, with the circumstances of whose birth the word is somewhat fancifully connected (Eurip. Bacch. 526). It was sung by a *κῶμος*, or band of revellers, directed by a leader.

set sail from Tarentum. The sailors, however, when they reached the open sea, formed a plot to throw him overboard and seize upon his riches. Discovering their design, he fell on his knees, beseeching them to spare his life, and making them welcome to his money. But they refused; and required him either to kill himself outright, if he wished for a grave on the dry land, or without loss of time to leap overboard into the sea. In this strait Arion begged them, since such was their pleasure, to allow him to mount upon the quarter-deck, dressed in his full costume, and there to play and sing, and promising that, as soon as his song was ended, he would destroy himself. Delighted at the prospect of hearing the very best harper in the world, they consented, and withdrew from the stern to the middle of the vessel: while Arion dressed himself in the full costume of his calling, took his harp, and standing on the quarter-deck, chanted the *Orthian*.¹ His strain ended, he flung himself, fully attired as he was, headlong into the sea. The Corinthians then sailed on to Corinth. As for Arion, a dolphin, they say, took him upon his back and carried him to Tænarum, where he went ashore, and thence proceeded to Corinth in his musician's dress, and told all that had happened to him. Periander, however, disbelieved the story, and put Arion in ward, to prevent his leaving Corinth, while he watched anxiously for the return of the mariners. On their arrival he summoned them before him and asked them if they could give him any tidings of Arion. They returned for answer that he was alive and in good health in Italy, and that they had left him at Tarentum,² where he was doing well. Thereupon Arion appeared before them, just as he was when he jumped from the vessel: the men, astonished and detected in falsehood, could no longer deny their guilt. Such is the account which the Corinthians and Lesbians give; and there is to this day at Tænarum, an offering of Arion's at the shrine, which is a small figure in bronze, representing a man seated upon a dolphin.³

25. Having brought the war with the Milesians to a close,

¹ According to the scholiast on Aristophanes, the Orphian was pitched in a high key, as the name would imply, and was a lively spirited air.

² In memory of this legend, the Tarentines were fond of exhibiting Arion, astride upon his dolphin, on their coins.

³ Various attempts have been made to rationalise the legend of Arion. The truth seems to be, that the legend grew out of the figure at Tænarum, which was known by its inscription to be an offering of Arion's. The figure itself remained at Tænarum more than seven hundred years. It was seen by Ælian in the third century after Christ.

and reigned over the land of Lydia for fifty-seven years, Alyattes died. He was the second prince of his house who made offerings at Delphi. His gifts, which he sent on recovering from his sickness, were a great bowl of pure silver, with a salver in steel curiously inlaid, a work among all the offerings at Delphi the best worth looking at. Glaucus, the Chian, made it, the man who first invented the art of inlaying steel.¹

26. On the death of Alyattes, Cræsus, his son, who was thirty-five years old, succeeded to the throne. Of the Greek cities, Ephesus was the first that he attacked. The Ephesians, when he laid siege to the place, made an offering of their city to Diana, by stretching a rope from the town wall to the temple of the goddess,² which was distant from the ancient city, then besieged by Cræsus, a space of seven furlongs.³ They were, as I said, the first Greeks whom he attacked. Afterwards, on some pretext or other, he made war in turn upon every Ionian and Æolian state, bringing forward, where he could, a substantial ground of complaint; where such failed him, advancing some poor excuse.

27. In this way he made himself master of all the Greek cities in Asia, and forced them to become his tributaries; after which he began to think of building ships, and attacking the islanders. Everything had been got ready for this purpose, when Bias of Priêné (or, as some say, Pittacus the Mytilenean) put a stop to the project. The king had made inquiry of this person, who was lately arrived at Sardis, if there were any news from Greece; to which he answered, "Yes, sire, the islanders are gathering ten thousand horse, designing an expedition against thee and against thy capital." Cræsus, thinking he spake seriously, broke out, "Ah, might the gods put such a thought into their minds as to attack the sons of the Lydians with cavalry!" "It seems, oh! king," rejoined the other, "that

¹ It is questionable whether by *κόλλησις* is to be understood the inlaying, or merely the welding of iron together. The only two descriptions which eye-witnesses have left us of the salver, lead in opposite directions.

² An analogous case is mentioned by Plutarch (Solon. c. 12). The fugitives implicated in the insurrection of Cylon at Athens connected themselves with the altar by a cord. Through the breaking of the cord they lost their sacred character. So, too, when Polycrates dedicated the island of Rheneia to the Delian Apollo, he connected it with Delos by a chain (Thucyd. iii. 104).

³ We learn by this that the site of Ephesus had changed between the time of Cræsus and that of Herodotus. The building seen by Herodotus was that burnt, B.C. 356.

thou desirest earnestly to catch the islanders on horseback upon the mainland,—thou knowest well what would come of it. But what thinkest thou the islanders desire better, now that they hear thou art about to build ships and sail against them, than to catch the Lydians at sea, and there revenge on them the wrongs of their brothers upon the mainland, whom thou holdest in slavery?" Cræsus was charmed with the turn of the speech; and thinking there was reason in what was said, gave up his ship-building and concluded a league of amity with the Ionians of the isles.

28. Cræsus afterwards, in the course of many years, brought under his sway almost all the nations to the west of the Halys. The Lycians and Cilicians alone continued free; all the other tribes he reduced and held in subjection. They were the following: the Lydians, Phrygians, Mysians, Mariandynians, Chalybians, Paphlagonians, Thynian and Bithynian Thracians, Carians, Ionians, Dorians, Æolians and Pamphylians.¹

29. When all these conquests had been added to the Lydian empire, and the prosperity of Sardis was now at its height, there came thither, one after another, all the sages of Greece living at the time, and among them Solon, the Athenian.² He was on his travels, having left Athens to be absent ten years, under the pretence of wishing to see the world, but really to avoid being forced to repeal any of the laws which, at the request of the Athenians, he had made for them. Without his sanction the Athenians could not repeal them, as they had bound themselves under a heavy curse to be governed for ten years by the laws which should be imposed on them by Solon.³

30. On this account, as well as to see the world, Solon set out

¹ It is not quite correct to speak of the Cilicians as dwelling *within* (i.e., west of) the Halys, for the Halys in its upper course ran *through* Cilicia (*διὰ Κιλικίαν*, ch. 72), and that country lay chiefly *south* of the river. Lycia and Cilicia would be likely to maintain their independence, being both countries of great natural strength. They lie upon the high mountain-range of Taurus, which runs from east to west along the south of Asia Minor, within about a degree of the shore, and sends down from the main chain a series of lateral branches or spurs, which extend to the sea along the whole line of coast from the Gulf of Makri, opposite Rhodes, to the plain of Tarsus. The mountains of the interior are in many parts covered with snow during the whole or the greater part of the year.

² Solon's visit to Cræsus was rejected as fabulous before the time of Plutarch (Solon. c. 27), on account of chronological difficulties. Cræsus most probably reigned from B.C. 568 to B.C. 554. Solon certainly outlived the first usurpation of the government at Athens by Pisistratus, which was B.C. 560.

³ The travels of Solon are attested by Plato (Tim. p. 21) and others.

upon his travels, in the course of which he went to Egypt to the court of Amasis,¹ and also came on a visit to Cræsus at Sardis. Cræsus received him as his guest, and lodged him in the royal palace. On the third or fourth day after, he bade his servants conduct Solon over his treasures,² and show him all their greatness and magnificence. When he had seen them all, and, so far as time allowed, inspected them, Cræsus addressed this question to him. "Stranger of Athens, we have heard much of thy wisdom and of thy travels through many lands, from love of knowledge and a wish to see the world. I am curious therefore to inquire of thee, whom, of all the men that thou hast seen, thou deemest the most happy?" This he asked because he thought himself the happiest of mortals: but Solon answered him without flattery, according to his true sentiments, "Tellus of Athens, sire." Full of astonishment at what he heard, Cræsus demanded sharply, "And wherefore dost thou deem Tellus happiest?" To which the other replied, "First, because his country was flourishing in his days, and he himself had sons both beautiful and good, and he lived to see children born to each of them, and these children all grew up; and further because, after a life spent in what our people look upon as comfort, his end was surpassingly glorious. In a battle between the Athenians and their neighbours near Eleusis, he came to the assistance of his countrymen, routed the foe, and died upon the field most gallantly. The Athenians gave him a public funeral on the spot where he fell, and paid him the highest honours."

31. Thus did Solon admonish Cræsus by the example of Tellus, enumerating the manifold particulars of his happiness. When he had ended, Cræsus inquired a second time, who after Tellus seemed to him the happiest, expecting that at any rate, he would be given the second place. "Cleobis and Bito," Solon answered; "they were of Argive race; their fortune was enough for their wants, and they were besides endowed with so much bodily strength that they had both gained prizes at the Games. Also this tale is told of them:—There was a great festival in honour of the goddess Juno at Argos, to which their mother must needs be taken in a car.³ Now the oxen did not come

¹ Amasis began to reign B.C. 569. Solon might sail from Athens to Egypt, thence to Cyprus (Herod. v. 113), and from Cyprus to Lydia.

² Vide *infra*, vi. 125.

³ Cicero and others relate that the ground of the necessity was the circumstances that the youths' mother was priestess of Juno at the time.

home from the field in time: so the youths, fearful of being too late, put the yoke on their own necks, and themselves drew the car in which their mother rode. Five and forty furlongs did they draw her, and stopped before the temple. This deed of theirs was witnessed by the whole assembly of worshippers, and then their life closed in the best possible way. Herein, too, God showed forth most evidently, how much better a thing for man death is than life. For the Argive men, who stood around the car, extolled the vast strength of the youths; and the Argive women extolled the mother who was blessed with such a pair of sons; and the mother herself, overjoyed at the deed and at the praises it had won, standing straight before the image, besought the goddess to bestow on Cleobis and Bito, the sons who had so mightily honoured her, the highest blessing to which mortals can attain. Her prayer ended, they offered sacrifice and partook of the holy banquet, after which the two youths fell asleep in the temple. They never woke more, but so passed from the earth. The Argives, looking on them as among the best of men, caused statues of them to be made, which they gave to the shrine at Delphi."

32. When Solon had thus assigned these youths the second place, Cræsus broke in angrily, "What, stranger of Athens, is my happiness, then, so utterly set at nought by thee, that thou dost not even put me on a level with private men?"

"Oh! Cræsus," replied the other, "thou askedst a question concerning the condition of man, of one who knows that the power above us is full of jealousy,¹ and fond of troubling our lot. A long life gives one to witness much, and experience much oneself, that one would not choose. Seventy years I

Servius says a pestilence had destroyed the oxen, which contradicts Herodotus. Otherwise the tale is told with fewer varieties than most ancient stories.

¹ The *φθόνος* ("jealousy") of God is a leading feature in Herodotus's conception of the Deity, and no doubt is one of the chief moral conclusions which he drew from his own survey of human events, and intended to impress on us by his history. (Vide *infra*, iii. 40, vii. 46, and especially vii. 10, § 5-6.) Herodotus's *φθονερὸς θεὸς* is not simply the "*Deus ultor*" of religious Romans, much less the "*jealous God*" of Scripture. The idea of an avenging God is *included* in the Herodotean conception, but is far from being the whole of it. Prosperity, not pride, eminence, not arrogance, provokes him. He does not like any one to be great or happy but himself (vii. 46, end). What is most remarkable is, that with such a conception of the Divine Nature, Herodotus could maintain such a placid, cheerful, childlike temper. Possibly he was serene because he felt secure in his mediocrity.

regard as the limit of the life of man.¹ In these seventy years are contained, without reckoning intercalary months, twenty-five thousand and two hundred days. Add an intercalary month to every other year, that the seasons may come round at the right time, and there will be, besides the seventy years, thirty-five such months, making an addition of one thousand and fifty days. The whole number of the days contained in the seventy years will thus be twenty-six thousand two hundred and fifty,² whereof not one but will produce events unlike the rest. Hence man is wholly accident. For thyself, oh! Cræsus, I see that thou art wonderfully rich, and art the lord of many nations; but with respect to that whereon thou questionest me, I have no answer to give, until I hear that thou hast closed thy life happily. For assuredly he who possesses great store of riches is no nearer happiness than he who has what suffices for his daily needs, unless it so hap that luck attend upon him, and so he continue in the enjoyment of all his good things to the end of life. For many of the wealthiest men have been unfavoured of fortune, and many whose means were moderate have had excellent luck. Men of the former class excel those of the latter but in two respects; these last excel the former in many. The wealthy man is better able to content his desires, and to bear up against a sudden buffet of calamity. The other has less ability to withstand these evils (from which, however, his good luck keeps him clear), but he enjoys all these following blessings: he is whole of limb, a stranger to disease, free from misfortune, happy in his children, and comely to look upon. If, in addition to all this, he end his life well, he is of a truth the man of whom thou art in search, the man who may rightly be termed happy. Call him, however, until he die, not happy but fortunate. Scarcely, indeed, can any man unite all these advantages: as there is no country which contains within it all that it needs, but each, while it possesses some things, lacks others, and the best

¹ "The days of our years are threescore years and ten" (Ps. xc. 10).

² No commentator on Herodotus has succeeded in explaining the curious mistake whereby the solar year is made to average 375 days. That Herodotus knew the true solar year was not 375, but more nearly 365 days, is clear from book ii. ch. 4. Two inaccuracies produce the error in Herodotus. In the first place he makes Solon count his months at 30 days each, whereas it is notorious that the Greek months, after the system of intercalation was introduced, were alternately of 29 and 30 days. By this error his first number is raised from 24,780 to 25,200; and also his second number from 1033 to 1050. Secondly, he omits to mention that from time to time (every 4th *τριετης* probably) the intercalary month was omitted altogether.

country is that which contains the most; so no single human being is complete in every respect—something is always lacking. He who unites the greatest number of advantages, and retaining them to the day of his death, then dies peaceably, that man alone, sire, is, in my judgment, entitled to bear the name of 'happy.' But in every matter it behoves us to mark well the end: for oftentimes God gives men a gleam of happiness, and then plunges them into ruin."

33. Such was the speech which Solon addressed to Cræsus, a speech which brought him neither largess nor honour. The king saw him depart with much indifference, since he thought that a man must be an arrant fool who made no account of present good, but bade men always wait and mark the end.

34. After Solon had gone away a dreadful vengeance, sent of God, came upon Cræsus, to punish him, it is likely, for deeming himself the happiest of men. First he had a dream in the night, which foreshowed him truly the evils that were about to befall him in the person of his son. For Cræsus had two sons, one blasted by a natural defect, being deaf and dumb; the other, distinguished far above all his co-mates in every pursuit. The name of the last was Atys. It was this son concerning whom he dreamt a dream, that he would die by the blow of an iron weapon. When he woke, he considered earnestly with himself, and, greatly alarmed at the dream, instantly made his son take a wife, and whereas in former years the youth had been wont to command the Lydian forces in the field, he now would not suffer him to accompany them. All the spears and javelins, and weapons used in the wars, he removed out of the male apartments, and laid them in heaps in the chambers of the women, fearing lest perhaps one of the weapons that hung against the wall might fall and strike him.

35. Now it chanced that while he was making arrangements for the wedding, there came to Sardis a man under a misfortune, who had upon him the stain of blood. He was by race a Phrygian, and belonged to the family of the king. Presenting himself at the palace of Cræsus, he prayed to be admitted to purification according to the customs of the country. Now the Lydian method of purifying is very nearly the same as the Greek. Cræsus granted the request, and went through all the customary rites, after which he asked the suppliant of his birth and country, addressing him as follows:—"Who art thou, stranger, and from what part of Phrygia fleddest thou to take

refuge at my hearth? And whom, moreover, what man or what woman, hast thou slain?" "Oh! king," replied the Phrygian, "I am the son of Gordias, son of Midas. I am named Adrastus.¹ The man I unintentionally slew was my own brother. For this my father drove me from the land, and I lost all. Then fled I here to thee." "Thou art the offspring," Cræsus rejoined, "of a house friendly to mine, and thou art come to friends. Thou shalt want for nothing so long as thou abidest in my dominions. Bear thy misfortune as easily as thou mayest, so will it go best with thee." Thenceforth Adrastus lived in the palace of the king.

36. It chanced that at this very same time there was in the Mysian Olympus a huge monster of a boar, which went forth often from this mountain-country, and wasted the corn-fields of the Mysians. Many a time had the Mysians collected to hunt the beast, but instead of doing him any hurt, they came off always with some loss to themselves. At length they sent ambassadors to Cræsus, who delivered their message to him in these words: "Oh! king, a mighty monster of a boar has appeared in our parts, and destroys the labour of our hands. We do our best to take him, but in vain. Now therefore we beseech thee to let thy son accompany us back, with some chosen youths and hounds, that we may rid our country of the animal." Such was the tenor of their prayer.

But Cræsus bethought him of his dream, and answered, "Say no more of my son going with you; that may not be in any wise. He is but just joined in wedlock, and is busy enough with that. I will grant you a picked band of Lydians, and all my huntsmen and hounds; and I will charge those whom I send to use all zeal in aiding you to rid your country of the brute."

37. With this reply the Mysians were content; but the king's son, hearing what the prayer of the Mysians was, came suddenly in, and on the refusal of Cræsus to let him go with them, thus addressed his father: "Formerly, my father, it was deemed the noblest and most suitable thing for me to frequent the wars and hunting-parties, and win myself glory in them; but now thou keepest me away from both, although thou hast never beheld in me either cowardice or lack of spirit. What face meanwhile must I wear as I walk to the forum or return from

¹ Adrastus is "the doomed"—"the man unable to escape." Atys is "the youth under the influence of Até"—"the man judicially blind."

it? What must the citizens, what must my young bride think of me? What sort of man will she suppose her husband to be? Either, therefore, let me go to the chace of this boar, or give me a reason why it is best for me to do according to thy wishes."

38. Then Cræsus answered, "My son, it is not because I have seen in thee either cowardice or aught else which has displeased me that I keep thee back; but because a vision which came before me in a dream as I slept, warned me that thou wert doomed to die young, pierced by an iron weapon. It was this which first led me to hasten on thy wedding, and now it hinders me from sending thee upon this enterprise. Fain would I keep watch over thee, if by any means I may cheat fate of thee during my own lifetime. For thou art the one and only son that I possess; the other, whose hearing is destroyed, I regard as if he were not."

39. "Ah! father," returned the youth, "I blame thee not for keeping watch over me after a dream so terrible; but if thou mistakest, if thou dost not apprehend the dream aright, 'tis no blame for me to show thee wherein thou errest. Now the dream, thou saidst thyself, foretold that I should die stricken by an iron weapon. But what hands has a boar to strike with? What iron weapon does he wield? Yet this is what thou fearest for me. Had the dream said that I should die pierced by a tusk, then thou hadst done well to keep me away; but it said a weapon. Now here we do not combat men, but a wild animal. I pray thee, therefore, let me go with them."

40. "There thou hast me, my son," said Cræsus, "thy interpretation is better than mine. I yield to it, and change my mind, and consent to let thee go."

41. Then the king sent for Adrastus, the Phrygian, and said to him, "Adrastus, when thou wert smitten with the rod of affliction—no reproach, my friend—I purified thee, and have taken thee to live with me in my palace, and have been at every charge. Now, therefore, it behoves thee to requite the good offices which thou hast received at my hands by consenting to go with my son on this hunting party, and to watch over him, if perchance you should be attacked upon the road by some band of daring robbers. Even apart from this, it were right for thee to go where thou mayest make thyself famous by noble deeds. They are the heritage of thy family, and thou too art so stalwart and strong."

42. Adrastus answered, "Except for thy request, Oh! king,

I would rather have kept away from this hunt; for methinks it ill beseems a man under a misfortune such as mine to consort with his happier compeers; and besides, I have no heart to it. On many grounds I had stayed behind; but, as thou urgest it, and I am bound to pleasure thee (for truly it does behove me to requite thy good offices), I am content to do as thou wishest. For thy son, whom thou givest into my charge, be sure thou shalt receive him back safe and sound, so far as depends upon a guardian's carefulness."

43. Thus assured, Cræsus let them depart, accompanied by a band of picked youths, and well provided with dogs of chase. When they reached Olympus, they scattered in quest of the animal; he was soon found, and the hunters, drawing round him in a circle, hurled their weapons at him. Then the stranger, the man who had been purified of blood, whose name was Adrastus, he also hurled his spear at the boar, but missed his aim, and struck Atys. Thus was the son of Cræsus slain by the point of an iron weapon, and the warning of the vision was fulfilled. Then one ran to Sardis to bear the tidings to the king, and he came and informed him of the combat and of the fate that had befallen his son.

44. If it was a heavy blow to the father to learn that his child was dead, it yet more strongly affected him to think that the very man whom he himself once purified had done the deed. In the violence of his grief he called aloud on Jupiter Catharsius,¹ to be a witness of what he had suffered at the stranger's hands. Afterwards he invoked the same god as Jupiter Ephistius and Hetæreus—using the one term because he had unwittingly harboured in his house the man who had now slain his son; and the other, because the stranger, who had been sent as his child's guardian, had turned out his most cruel enemy.

45. Presently the Lydians arrived, bearing the body of the youth, and behind them followed the homicide. He took his stand in front of the corse, and, stretching forth his hands to Cræsus, delivered himself into his power with earnest entreaties that he would sacrifice him upon the body of his son—"his

¹ Jupiter was Catharsius, "the god of purifications," not on account of the resemblance of the rites of purification with those of Jupiter *Μετῳχίος*, but simply in the same way that he was Ephistius and Hetærêus, god of hearths, and of companionship, because he presided over all occasions of obligation between man and man, and the purified person contracted an obligation towards his purifier.

former misfortune was burthen enough; now that he had added to it a second, and had brought ruin on the man who purified him, he could not bear to live." Then Cræsus, when he heard these words, was moved with pity towards Adrastus, notwithstanding the bitterness of his own calamity; and so he answered, "Enough, my friend; I have all the revenge that I require, since thou givest sentence of death against thyself. But in sooth it is not thou who hast injured me, except so far as thou hast unwittingly dealt the blow. Some god is the author of my misfortune, and I was forewarned of it a long time ago." Cræsus after this buried the body of his son, with such honours as befitted the occasion. Adrastus, son of Gordias, son of Midas, the destroyer of his brother in time past, the destroyer now of his purifier, regarding himself as the most unfortunate wretch whom he had ever known, so soon as all was quiet about the place, slew himself upon the tomb. Cræsus, bereft of his son, gave himself up to mourning for two full years.

46. At the end of this time the grief of Cræsus was interrupted by intelligence from abroad. He learnt that Cyrus, the son of Cambyses, had destroyed the empire of Astyages, the son of Cyaxares; and that the Persians were becoming daily more powerful. This led him to consider with himself whether it were possible to check the growing power of that people before it came to a head. With this design he resolved to make instant trial of the several oracles in Greece, and of the one in Libya.¹ So he sent his messengers in different directions, some to Delphi, some to Abæ in Phocis, and some to Dodôna; others to the oracle of Amphiaraüs; others to that of Trophonius; others, again, to Branchidæ in Milesia.² These were the Greek oracles which he consulted. To Libya he sent another embassy, to consult the oracle of Ammon. These messengers were sent to test the knowledge of the oracles, that, if they were found really to return true answers, he might send a second time, and inquire if he ought to attack the Persians.

47. The messengers who were despatched to make trial of the oracles were given the following instructions: they were to keep count of the days from the time of their leaving Sardis, and, reckoning from that date, on the hundredth day they were to

¹ "The one in Libya" (Africa)—that of Ammon, because Egypt was regarded by Herodotus as in Asia, not in Africa.

² The oracle at Abæ seems to have ranked next to that at Delphi. The Orientals do not appear to have possessed any indigenous oracles.

consult the oracles, and to inquire of them what Cræsus the son of Alyattes, king of Lydia, was doing at that moment. The answers given them were to be taken down in writing, and brought back to him. None of the replies remain on record except that of the oraclé at Delphi. There, the moment that the Lydians entered the sanctuary,¹ and before they put their questions, the Pythoness thus answered them in hexameter verse:—

I can count the sands, and I can measure the ocean;
I have ears for the silent, and know what the dumb man meaneth;
Lo! on my sense there striketh the smell of a shell-covered tortoise,
Boiling now on a fire, with the flesh of a lamb, in a cauldron,—
Brass is the vessel below, and brass the cover above it.

48. These words the Lydians wrote down at the mouth of the Pythoness as she prophesied, and then set off on their return to Sardis. When all the messengers had come back with the answers which they had received, Cræsus undid the rolls, and read what was written in each. Only one approved itself to him, that of the Delphic oracle. This he had no sooner heard than he instantly made an act of adoration, and accepted it as true, declaring that the Delphic was the only really oracular shrine, the only one that had discovered in what way he was in fact employed. For on the departure of his messengers he had set himself to think what was most impossible for any one to conceive of his doing,² and then, waiting till the day agreed on came, he acted as he had determined. He took a tortoise and a lamb, and cutting them in pieces with his own hands, boiled them both together in a brazen cauldron, covered over with a lid which was also of brass.

49. Such then was the answer returned to Cræsus from Delphi. What the answer was which the Lydians who went to the shrine of Amphiaraüs and performed the customary rites, obtained of the oracle there, I have it not in my power to mention, for there is no record of it. All that is known is, that

¹ The μέγαρον was the "inner shrine," the sacred chamber where the oracles were given.

² It is impossible to discuss such a question as the nature of the ancient oracles, which has had volumes written upon it, within the limits of a note. I will only observe that in forming our judgment on the subject, two points should be kept steadily in view: (1) the fact that the Pythoness whom St. Paul met with on his first entrance into European Greece, was *really possessed* by an evil spirit, which St. Paul cast out, thereby depriving her masters of all their hopes of gain (Acts xvi. 16-19): and (2) the phenomena of Mesmerism. In one or other of these, or in both of them combined, will be found the simplest, and probably the truest explanation, of all that is really marvellous in the responses of the oracles.

Cræsus believed himself to have found there also an oracle which spoke the truth.

50. After this Cræsus, having resolved to propitiate the Delphic god with a magnificent sacrifice, offered up three thousand of every kind of sacrificial beast, and besides made a huge pile, and placed upon it couches coated with silver and with gold, and golden goblets, and robes and vests of purple; all which he burnt in the hope of thereby making himself more secure of the favour of the god. Further he issued his orders to all the people of the land to offer a sacrifice according to their means. When the sacrifice was ended, the king melted down a vast quantity of gold, and ran it into ingots, making them six palms long, three palms broad, and one palm in thickness. The number of ingots was a hundred and seventeen, four being of refined gold, in weight two talents and a half; the others of pale gold, and in weight two talents. He also caused a statue of a lion to be made in refined gold, the weight of which was ten talents. At the time when the temple of Delphi was burnt to the ground,¹ this lion fell from the ingots on which it was placed; it now stands in the Corinthian treasury, and weighs only six talents and a half, having lost three talents and a half by the fire.

51. On the completion of these works Cræsus sent them away to Delphi, and with them two bowls of an enormous size, one of gold, the other of silver, which used to stand, the latter upon the right, the former upon the left, as one entered the temple. They too were moved at the time of the fire; and now the golden one is in the Clazomenian treasury, and weighs eight talents and forty-two minæ; the silver one stands in the corner of the ante-chapel, and holds six hundred amphoræ. This is known, because the Delphians fill it at the time of the Theophania.² It is said by the Delphians to be a work of Theodore the Samian,³ and I think that they say true, for assuredly it is the work of no common artist. Cræsus sent also four silver casks, which are in the Corinthian treasury, and two lustral vases, a golden and a silver one. On the former is inscribed the

¹ Vide infra, ii. 180, v. 62. It was burnt accidentally.

² Both in Julius Pollux and in Philostratus there is mention of the Theophania, as a festival celebrated by the Greeks. No particulars are known of it.

³ Pausanias ascribed to Theodore of Samos the invention of casting in bronze, and spoke of him also as an architect (iii. xii. § 8; viii. xiv. § 5). Pliny agreed with both statements (Nat. Hist. xxxv. 12).

name of the Lacedæmonians, and they claim it as a gift of theirs, but wrongly, since it was really given by Cræsus. The inscription upon it was cut by a Delphian, who wished to please the Lacedæmonians. His name is known to me, but I forbear to mention it. The boy, through whose hand the water runs, is (I confess) a Lacedæmonian gift, but they did not give either of the lustral vases. Besides these various offerings, Cræsus sent to Delphi many others of less account, among the rest a number of round silver basins. Also he dedicated a female figure in gold, three cubits high, which is said by the Delphians to be the statue of his baking-woman; and further, he presented the necklace and the girdles of his wife.

52. These were the offerings sent by Cræsus to Delphi. To the shrine of Amphiaraus, with whose valour and misfortune he was acquainted,¹ he sent a shield entirely of gold, and a spear, also of solid gold, both head and shaft. They were still existing in my day at Thebes, laid up in the temple of Ismenian Apollo.

53. The messengers who had the charge of conveying these treasures to the shrines, received instructions to ask the oracles whether Cræsus should go to war with the Persians, and if so, whether he should strengthen himself by the forces of an ally. Accordingly, when they had reached their destinations and presented the gifts, they proceeded to consult the oracles in the following terms:—"Cræsus, king of Lydia and other countries, believing that these are the only real oracles in all the world, has sent you such presents as your discoveries deserved, and now inquires of you whether he shall go to war with the Persians, and if so, whether he shall strengthen himself by the forces of a confederate." Both the oracles agreed in the tenor of their reply, which was in each case a prophecy that if Cræsus attacked the Persians, he would destroy a mighty empire, and a recommendation to him to look and see who were the most powerful of the Greeks, and to make alliance with them.

54. At the receipt of these oracular replies Cræsus was overjoyed, and feeling sure now that he would destroy the empire of the Persians, he sent once more to Pytho, and presented to the Delphians, the number of whom he had ascertained, two gold staters apiece.² In return for this the Delphians granted to

¹ For the story of Amphiaraus, cf. Pausan. i. 34, ii. 13, § 6. Æschylus Sept. contr. Th. 564 et seqq. The "misfortune" is his being engulfed near Orôpus, or (as some said) at Harma in Bœotia.

² For the value of the stater, see note on Book vii. ch. 28.

Cræsus and the Lydians the privilege of precedency in consulting the oracle, exemption from all charges, the most honourable seat at the festivals, and the perpetual right of becoming at pleasure citizens of their town.

55. After sending these presents to the Delphians, Cræsus a third time consulted the oracle, for having once proved its truthfulness, he wished to make constant use of it. The question whereto he now desired an answer was—"Whether his kingdom would be of long duration?" The following was the reply of the Pythoness:—

Wait till the time shall come when a mule is monarch of Media;
Then, thou delicate Lydian, away to the pebbles of Hermus;
Haste, oh! haste thee away, nor blush to behave like a coward.

56. Of all the answers that had reached him, this pleased him far the best, for it seemed incredible that a mule should ever come to be king of the Medes, and so he concluded that the sovereignty would never depart from himself or his seed after him. Afterwards he turned his thoughts to the alliance which he had been recommended to contract, and sought to ascertain by inquiry which was the most powerful of the Grecian states. His inquiries pointed out to him two states as pre-eminent above the rest. These were the Lacedæmonians and the Athenians, the former of Doric the latter of Ionic blood. And indeed these two nations had held from very early times the most distinguished place in Greece, the one being a Pelasgic the other a Hellenic people, and the one having never quitted its original seats, while the other had been excessively migratory; for during the reign of Deucalion, Phthiôtis was the country in which the Hellenes dwelt, but under Dorus, the son of Hellen, they moved to the tract at the base of Ossa and Olympus, which is called Histiaëôtis; forced to retire from that region by the Cadmeians,¹ they settled, under the name of Macedni, in the chain of Pindus. Hence they once more removed and came to Dryopis; and from Dryopis having entered the Peloponnese in this way, they became known as Dorians.

57. What the language of the Pelasgi was I cannot say with any certainty. If, however, we may form a conjecture from the tongue spoken by the Pelasgi of the present day,—those,

¹ The Cadmeians were the Græco-Phœnician race (their name merely signifying "the Easterns"), who in the ante-Trojan times, occupied the country which was afterwards called Bœotia. Hence the Greek tragedians, in plays of which ancient Thebes is the scene, invariably speak of the Thebans as Καδμείοι, Καδμείος λεῶς.

for instance, who live at Creston above the Tyrrhenians, who formerly dwelt in the district named Thessaliôtis, and were neighbours of the people now called the Dorians,—or those again who founded Placia and Scylacé upon the Hellespont, who had previously dwelt for some time with the Athenians,¹—or those, in short, of any other of the cities which have dropped the name but are in fact Pelasgian; if, I say, we are to form a conjecture from any of these, we must pronounce that the Pelasgi spoke a barbarous language. If this were really so, and the entire Pelasgic race spoke the same tongue, the Athenians, who were certainly Pelasgi, must have changed their language at the same time that they passed into the Hellenic body; for it is a certain fact that the people of Creston speak a language unlike any of their neighbours, and the same is true of the Placianians, while the language spoken by these two people is the same; which shows that they both retain the idiom which they brought with them into the countries where they are now settled.

58. The Hellenic race has never, since its first origin, changed its speech. This at least seems evident to me. It was a branch of the Pelasgic, which separated from the main body, and at first was scanty in numbers and of little power; but it gradually spread and increased to a multitude of nations, chiefly by the voluntary entrance into its ranks of numerous tribes of barbarians. The Pelasgi, on the other hand, were, as I think, a barbarian race which never greatly multiplied.

59. On inquiring into the condition of these two nations, Crœsus found that one, the Athenian, was in a state of grievous oppression and distraction under Pisistratus, the son of Hippocrates, who was at that time tyrant of Athens. Hippocrates, when he was a private citizen, is said to have gone once upon a time to Olympia to see the games, when a wonderful prodigy happened to him. As he was employed in sacrificing, the cauldrons which stood near, full of water and of the flesh of the victims, began to boil without the help of fire, so that the water overflowed the pots. Chilon the Lacedæmonian, who happened to be there and to witness the prodigy, advised Hippocrates, if he were unmarried, never to take into his house a wife who could bear him a child; if he already had one, to send her back to her friends; if he had a son, to disown him. Chilon's advice did not at all please Hippocrates, who disregarded it, and some

¹ Vide infra, vi. 137.

time after became the father of Pisistratus. This Pisistratus, at a time when there was civil contention in Attica between the party of the Sea-coast headed by Megacles the son of Alcmaëon, and that of the Plain headed by Lycurgus, one of the Aristolaïds, formed the project of making himself tyrant, and with this view created a third party.¹ Gathering together a band of partisans, and giving himself out for the protector of the Highlanders, he contrived the following stratagem. He wounded himself and his mules, and then drove his chariot into the market-place, professing to have just escaped an attack of his enemies, who had attempted his life as he was on his way into the country. He besought the people to assign him a guard to protect his person, reminding them of the glory which he had gained when he led the attack upon the Megarians, and took the town of Nisæa,² at the same time performing many other exploits. The Athenians, deceived by his story, appointed him a band of citizens to serve as a guard, who were to carry clubs instead of spears, and to accompany him wherever he went. Thus strengthened, Pisistratus broke into revolt and seized the citadel. In this way he acquired the sovereignty of Athens, which he continued to hold without disturbing the previously existing offices or altering any of the laws. He administered the state according to the established usages, and his arrangements were wise and salutary.

60. However, after a little time, the partisans of Megacles and those of Lycurgus agreed to forget their differences, and united to drive him out. So Pisistratus, having by the means described first made himself master of Athens, lost his power again before it had time to take root. No sooner, however, was he departed than the factions which had driven him out quarrelled anew, and at last Megacles, wearied with the struggle, sent a herald to Pisistratus, with an offer to re-establish him on the throne if he would marry his daughter. Pisistratus consented, and on these terms an agreement was concluded between the two, after which they proceeded to devise the mode of his restoration. And here the device on which they hit was the silliest that I find on record, more especially considering that

¹ There can be no doubt that these local factions must also have been political parties.

² Plutarch mentions a war between Athens and Megara, under the conduct of Solon, in which Pisistratus was said to have distinguished himself (Solon. c. 8), as having occurred before Solon's legislation, *i.e.* before B.C. 594.

the Greeks have been from very ancient times distinguished from the barbarians by superior sagacity and freedom from foolish simpleness, and remembering that the persons on whom this trick was played were not only Greeks but Athenians, who have the credit of surpassing all other Greeks in cleverness. There was in the Pæanian district a woman named Phya,¹ whose height only fell short of four cubits by three fingers' breadth, and who was altogether comely to look upon. This woman they clothed in complete armour, and, instructing her as to the carriage which she was to maintain in order to beseem her part, they placed her in a chariot and drove to the city. Herald's had been sent forward to precede her, and to make proclamation to this effect: "Citizens of Athens, receive again Pisistratus with friendly minds. Minerva, who of all men honours him the most, herself conducts him back to her own citadel." This they proclaimed in all directions, and immediately the rumour spread throughout the country districts that Minerva was bringing back her favourite. They of the city also, fully persuaded that the woman was the veritable goddess, prostrated themselves before her, and received Pisistratus back.

61. Pisistratus, having thus recovered the sovereignty, married, according to agreement, the daughter of Megacles. As, however, he had already a family of grown up sons, and the Alcæonidæ were supposed to be under a curse,² he determined that there should be no issue of the marriage. His wife at first kept this matter to herself, but after a time, either her mother questioned her, or it may be that she told it of her own accord. At any rate, she informed her mother, and so it reached her father's ears. Megacles, indignant at receiving an affront from such a quarter, in his anger instantly made up his differences with the opposite faction, on which Pisistratus, aware of what was planning against him, took himself out of the country.

¹ Grote has some just remarks upon the observations with which Herodotus accompanies the story of Phya. It seems clear that the Greeks of the age of Pisistratus fully believed in the occasional presence upon earth of the Gods. Grote refers to the well-known appearance of the God Pan to Phidippides a little before the battle of Marathon, which Herodotus himself states to have been received as true by the Athenians (vi. 105). [The woman's height would be about 6 English feet.]

² Vide *infra*, v. 70-1; Thucyd. i. 126; Plut. Solon. c. 12. The curse rested on them upon account of their treatment of the partisans of Cylon. The archon of the time, Megacles, not only broke faith with them after he had, by a pledge to spare their lives, induced them to leave the sacred precinct of Minerva in the Acropolis, but also slew a number at the altar of the Eumenides.

Arrived at Eretria, he held a council with his children to decide what was to be done. The opinion of Hippias prevailed, and it was agreed to aim at regaining the sovereignty. The first step was to obtain advances of money from such states as were under obligations to them. By these means they collected large sums from several countries, especially from the Thebans, who gave them far more than any of the rest. To be brief, time passed, and all was at length got ready for their return. A band of Argive mercenaries arrived from the Peloponnese, and a certain Naxian named Lygdamis, who volunteered his services, was particularly zealous in the cause, supplying both men and money.

62. In the eleventh year of their exile the family of Pisistratus set sail from Eretria on their return home. They made the coast of Attica, near Marathon, where they encamped, and were joined by their partisans from the capital and by numbers from the country districts, who loved tyranny better than freedom. At Athens, while Pisistratus was obtaining funds, and even after he landed at Marathon, no one paid any attention to his proceedings. When, however, it became known that he had left Marathon, and was marching upon the city, preparations were made for resistance, the whole force of the state was levied, and led against the returning exiles. Meantime the army of Pisistratus, which had broken up from Marathon, meeting their adversaries near the temple of the Pallonian Minerva,¹ pitched their camp opposite them. Here a certain soothsayer, Amphilytus by name, an Acarnanian, moved by a divine impulse, came into the presence of Pisistratus, and approaching him uttered this prophecy in the hexameter measure:—

Now has the cast been made, the net is out-spread in the water,
Through the moonshiny night the tunnies will enter the meshes.

63. Such was the prophecy uttered under a divine inspiration. Pisistratus, apprehending its meaning, declared that he accepted the oracle, and instantly led on his army. The Athenians from the city had just finished their midday meal, after which they had betaken themselves, some to dice, others to sleep, when Pisistratus with his troops fell upon them and

¹ Pallêné was a village of Attica, near Gargettus, which is the modern *Garitó*. It was famous for its temple of Minerva [Athena], which was of such magnificence as to be made the subject of a special treatise by Themison, whose book, entitled *Pallenis*, is mentioned by Athenæus (vi. 6, p. 235).

put them to the rout. As soon as the flight began, Pisistratus bethought himself of a most wise contrivance, whereby the Athenians might be induced to disperse and not unite in a body any more. He mounted his sons on horseback and sent them on in front to overtake the fugitives, and exhort them to be of good cheer, and return each man to his home. The Athenians took the advice, and Pisistratus became for the third time master of Athens.

64. Upon this he set himself to root his power more firmly, by the aid of a numerous body of mercenaries, and by keeping up a full exchequer, partly supplied from native sources, partly from the countries about the river Strymon.¹ He also demanded hostages from many of the Athenians who had remained at home, and not left Athens at his approach; and these he sent to Naxos, which he had conquered by force of arms, and given over into the charge of Lygdamis. Farther, he purified the island of Delos, according to the injunctions of an oracle, after the following fashion. All the dead bodies which had been interred within sight of the temple he dug up, and removed to another part of the isle.² Thus was the tyranny of Pisistratus established at Athens, many of the Athenians having fallen in the battle, and many others having fled the country together with the son of Alcmaeon.

65. Such was the condition of the Athenians when Cræsus made inquiry concerning them.³ Proceeding to seek information concerning the Lacedæmonians, he learnt that, after passing through a period of great depression, they had lately been victorious in a war with the people of Tegea; for, during the joint reign of Leo and Agasicles, kings of Sparta, the Lacedæmonians, successful in all their other wars, suffered continual defeat at the hands of the Tegeans. At a still earlier period they had been the very worst governed people in Greece, as well in matters of internal management as in their relations

¹ The revenues of Pisistratus were derived in part from the income-tax of five per cent. which he levied from his subjects (Thucyd. vi. 54. *Ἀθηναίους εἰκοστὴν πρᾶσσόμενοι τῶν γιγνομένων*), in part probably from the silver-mines at Laurium, which a little later were so remarkably productive (Herod. vii. 144). He had also a third source of revenue, of which Herodotus here speaks, consisting apparently either of lands or mines lying near the Strymon, and belonging to him probably in his private capacity. That part of Thrace was famous for its gold and silver mines.

² Compare Thucyd. iii. 104.

³ The embassy of Cræsus cannot possibly have been subsequent to the final establishment of Pisistratus at Athens, which was in B.C. 542 at the earliest. It probably occurred during his first term of power.

towards foreigners, from whom they kept entirely aloof. The circumstances which led to their being well governed were the following:—Lycurgus, a man of distinction among the Spartans, had gone to Delphi, to visit the oracle. Scarcely had he entered into the inner fane, when the Pythoness exclaimed aloud,

Oh! thou great Lycurgus, that com'st to my beautiful dwelling,
Dear to Jove, and to all who sit in the halls of Olympus,
Whether to hail thee a god I know not, or only a mortal,
But my hope is strong that a god thou wilt prove, Lycurgus.

Some report besides, that the Pythoness delivered to him the entire system of laws which are still observed by the Spartans. The Lacedæmonians, however, themselves assert that Lycurgus, when he was guardian of his nephew, Labotas, king of Sparta, and regent in his room, introduced them from Crete; for as soon as he became regent, he altered the whole of the existing customs, substituting new ones, which he took care should be observed by all. After this he arranged whatever appertained to war, establishing the Enomotiæ, Triacades, and Syssitia,¹ besides which he instituted the senate,² and the ephoralty. Such was the way in which the Lacedæmonians became a well-governed people.

66. On the death of Lycurgus they built him a temple, and ever since they have worshipped him with the utmost reverence. Their soil being good and the population numerous, they sprang up rapidly to power, and became a flourishing people. In consequence they soon ceased to be satisfied to stay quiet; and, regarding the Arcadians as very much their inferiors, they sent to consult the oracle about conquering the whole of Arcadia. The Pythoness thus answered them:

Cravest thou Arcady? Bold is thy craving. I shall not content it.
Many the men that in Arcady dwell, whose food is the acorn—
They will never allow thee. It is not I that am niggard.
I will give thee to dance in Tegea, with noisy foot-fall,
And with the measuring line mete out the glorious campaign.

¹ The *ἐνωμοτίαι* were divisions of the Spartan cohort (λόχος). Of the *τρηκάδες* nothing seems to be known. They may have been also divisions of the army—but divisions confined to the camp, not existing in the field. The word *συσσίτια* would seem in this place not to have its ordinary signification, "common meals" or "messes," but to be applied to the "set of persons who were appointed to mess together."

² It is quite inconceivable that Lycurgus should in any sense have instituted the senate. Lycurgus appears to have made scarcely any changes in the constitution. What he did was to alter the customs and habits of the people.

When the Lacedæmonians received this reply, leaving the rest of Arcadia untouched, they marched against the Tegeans, carrying with them fetters, so confident had this oracle (which was, in truth, but of base metal) made them that they would enslave the Tegeans. The battle, however, went against them, and many fell into the enemy's hands. Then these persons, wearing the fetters which they had themselves brought, and fastened together in a string, measured the Tegean plain as they executed their labours. The fetters in which they worked were still, in my day, preserved at Tegea where they hung round the walls of the temple of Minerva Alea.¹

67. Throughout the whole of this early contest with the Tegeans, the Lacedæmonians met with nothing but defeats; but in the time of Cræsus, under the kings Anaxandrides and Aristo, fortune had turned in their favour, in the manner which I will now relate. Having been worsted in every engagement by their enemy, they sent to Delphi, and inquired of the oracle what god they must propitiate to prevail in the war against the Tegeans. The answer of the Pythoness was, that before they could prevail, they must remove to Sparta the bones of Orestes, the son of Agamemnon. Unable to discover his burial-place, they sent a second time, and asked the god where the body of the hero had been laid. The following was the answer they received:—

Level and smooth is the plain where Arcadian Tegea standeth;
There two winds are ever, by strong necessity, blowing,
Counter-stroke answers stroke, and evil lies upon evil.
There all-teeming Earth doth harbour the son of Atrides;
Bring thou him to thy city, and then be Tegea's master.

After this reply, the Lacedæmonians were no nearer discovering the burial-place than before, though they continued to search for it diligently; until at last a man named Lichas, one of the Spartans called Agathoërgi, found it. The Agathoërgi are citizens who have just served their time among the knights. The five eldest of the knights go out every year, and are bound during the year after their discharge, to go wherever the State sends them, and actively employ themselves in its service.

68. Lichas was one of this body when, partly by good luck, partly by his own wisdom, he discovered the burial-place.

¹ Minerva Alea was an Arcadian goddess. She was worshipped at Mantinea, Manthylrea, and Alea, as well as at Tegea. Her temple at Tegea was particularly magnificent. See the description in Pausanias (VIII. xlvii. § 1-2).

Intercourse between the two States existing just at this time, he went to Tegea, and, happening to enter into the workshop of a smith, he saw him forging some iron. As he stood marveling at what he beheld,¹ he was observed by the smith who, leaving off his work, went up to him and said,

“Certainly, then, you Spartan stranger, you would have been wonderfully surprised if you had seen what I have, since you make a marvel even of the working in iron. I wanted to make myself a well in this room, and began to dig it, when what think you? I came upon a coffin seven cubits long. I had never believed that men were taller in the olden times than they are now, so I opened the coffin. The body inside was of the same length: I measured it, and filled up the hole again.”

Such was the man's account of what he had seen. The other, on turning the matter over in his mind, conjectured that this was the body of Orestes, of which the oracle had spoken. He guessed so, because he observed that the smithy had two bellows, which he understood to be the two winds, and the hammer and anvil would do for the stroke and the counter-stroke, and the iron that was being wrought for the evil lying upon evil. This he imagined might be so because iron had been discovered to the hurt of man. Full of these conjectures, he sped back to Sparta and laid the whole matter before his countrymen. Soon after, by a concerted plan, they brought a charge against him, and began a prosecution. Lichas betook himself to Tegea, and on his arrival acquainted the smith with his misfortune, and proposed to rent his room of him. The smith refused for some time; but at last Lichas persuaded him, and took up his abode in it. Then he opened the grave, and collecting the bones, returned with them to Sparta. From henceforth, whenever the Spartans and the Tegeans made trial of each other's skill in arms, the Spartans always had greatly the advantage; and by the time to which we are now come they were masters of most of the Peloponnese.

69. Cræsus, informed of all these circumstances, sent messengers to Sparta, with gifts in their hands, who were to ask the Spartans to enter into alliance with him. They received strict injunctions as to what they should say, and on their arrival at Sparta spake as follows:—

¹ Herodotus means to represent that the forging of *iron* was a novelty at the time. Brass was known to the Greeks before iron, as the Homeric poems sufficiently indicate.

“ Cræsus, king of the Lydians and of other nations, has sent us to speak thus to you; ‘ Oh! Lacedæmonians, the god has bidden me to make the Greek my friend; I therefore apply to you, in conformity with the oracle, knowing that you hold the first rank in Greece, and desire to become your friend and ally in all true faith and honesty.’ ”

Such was the message which Cræsus sent by his heralds. The Lacedæmonians, who were aware beforehand of the reply given him by the oracle, were full of joy at the coming of the messengers, and at once took the oaths of friendship and alliance: this they did the more readily as they had previously contracted certain obligations towards him. They had sent to Sardis on one occasion to purchase some gold, intending to use it on a statue of Apollo—the statue, namely, which remains to this day at Thornax in Laconia,¹ when Cræsus, hearing of the matter, gave them as a gift the gold which they wanted.

70. This was one reason why the Lacedæmonians were so willing to make the alliance: another was, because Cræsus had chosen them for his friends in preference to all the other Greeks. They therefore held themselves in readiness to come at his summons, and not content with so doing, they further had a huge vase made in bronze, covered with figures of animals all round the outside of the rim, and large enough to contain three hundred amphoræ, which they sent to Cræsus as a return for his presents to them. The vase, however, never reached Sardis. Its miscarriage is accounted for in two quite different ways. The Lacedæmonian story is, that when it reached Samos, on its way towards Sardis, the Samians having knowledge of it, put to sea in their ships of war and made it their prize. But the Samians declare, that the Lacedæmonians who had the vase in charge, happening to arrive too late, and learning that Sardis had fallen and that Cræsus was a prisoner, sold it in their island, and the purchasers (who were, they say, private persons) made an offering of it at the shrine of Juno:² the sellers were very likely on their return to Sparta to have said that they had been robbed of it by the Samians. Such, then, was the fate of the vase.

71. Meanwhile Cræsus, taking the oracle in a wrong sense, led his forces into Cappadocia, fully expecting to defeat Cyrus

¹ Pausanias declares that the gold obtained of Cræsus by the Lacedæmonians was used in fact upon a statue of Apollo at Amyclæ (III. x. § 10).

² Vide infra, ii. 182

and destroy the empire of the Persians. While he was still engaged in making preparations for his attack, a Lydian named Sandanis, who had always been looked upon as a wise man, but who after this obtained a very great name indeed among his countrymen, came forward and counselled the king in these words:

"Thou art about, oh! king, to make war against men who wear leathern trousers, and have all their other garments of leather;¹ who feed not on what they like, but on what they can get from a soil that is sterile and unkindly; who do not indulge in wine, but drink water; who possess no figs nor anything else that is good to eat. If, then, thou conquerest them, what canst thou get from them, seeing that they have nothing at all? But if they conquer thee, consider how much that is precious thou wilt lose: if they once get a taste of our pleasant things, they will keep such hold of them that we shall never be able to make them loose their grasp. For my part, I am thankful to the gods, that they have not put it into the hearts of the Persians to invade Lydia."

Cræsus was not persuaded by this speech, though it was true enough; for before the conquest of Lydia, the Persians possessed none of the luxuries or delights of life.

72. The Cappadocians are known to the Greeks by the name of Syrians.² Before the rise of the Persian power, they had been subject to the Medes; but at the present time they were within the empire of Cyrus, for the boundary between the Median and the Lydian empires was the river Halys. This stream, which rises in the mountain country of Armenia, runs first through Cilicia; afterwards it flows for a while with the Matiëni on the right, and the Phrygians on the left: then, when they are passed, it proceeds with a northern course, separating the Cappadocian Syrians from the Paphlagonians, who occupy the left bank, thus forming the boundary of almost the whole of Lower Asia, from the sea opposite Cyprus to the Euxine. Just there is the neck of the peninsula, a journey of five days across for an active walker.³

¹ For a description of the Persian dress, see note on ch. 135.

² Vide *infra*, vii. 72. The Cappadocians of Herodotus inhabit the country bounded by the Euxine on the north, the Halys on the west, the Armenians apparently on the east (from whom the Cappadocians are clearly distinguished, vii. 72-3), and the Matieni on the south.

³ Herodotus tells us in one place (iv. 101) that he reckons the day's journey at 200 stadia, that is at about 23 of our miles. If we regard this

73. There were two motives which led Croesus to attack Cappadocia: firstly, he coveted the land, which he wished to add to his own dominions; but the chief reason was, that he wanted to revenge on Cyrus the wrongs of Astyages, and was made confident by the oracle of being able so to do: for the Astyages, son of Cyaxares and king of the Medes, who had been dethroned by Cyrus, son of Cambyses, was Croesus' brother by marriage. This marriage had taken place under circumstances which I will now relate. A band of Scythian nomads, who had left their own land on occasion of some disturbance, had taken refuge in Media. Cyaxares, son of Phraortes, and grandson of Deïoces, was at that time king of the country. Recognising them as suppliants, he began by treating them with kindness, and coming presently to esteem them highly, he intrusted to their care a number of boys, whom they were to teach their language and to instruct in the use of the bow. Time passed, and the Scythians employed themselves, day after day, in hunting, and always brought home some game; but at last it chanced that one day they took nothing. On their return to Cyaxares with empty hands, that monarch, who was hot-tempered, as he showed upon the occasion, received them very rudely and insultingly. In consequence of this treatment, which they did not conceive themselves to have deserved, the Scythians determined to take one of the boys whom they had in charge, cut him in pieces, and then dressing the flesh as they were wont to dress that of the wild animals, serve it up to Cyaxares as game: after which they resolved to convey themselves with all speed to Sardis, to the court of Alyattes, the son of Sadyattes. The plan was carried out: Cyaxares and his guests ate of the flesh prepared by the Scythians, and they themselves, having accomplished their purpose, fled to Alyattes in the guise of suppliants.

74. Afterwards, on the refusal of Alyattes to give up his suppliants when Cyaxares sent to demand them of him, war broke out between the Lydians and the Medes, and continued

as the measure intended here, we must consider that Herodotus imagined the isthmus of Natolia to be but 115 miles across, 165 miles short of the truth. It must be observed, however, that the ordinary day's journey cannot be intended by the ὁδὸς ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἀνδρῶν. The ἀνὴρ εὐζωρὸς is not the mere common traveller. He is the lightly-equipped pedestrian, and his day's journey must be estimated at something considerably above 200 stades. Herodotus appears to speak not of any particular case or cases, but generally of all lightly-equipped pedestrians. He cannot therefore be rightly regarded as free from mistake in the matter. Probably he considered the isthmus at least 100 miles narrower than it really is.

for five years, with various success. In the course of it the Medes gained many victories over the Lydians, and the Lydians also gained many victories over the Medes. Among their other battles there was one night engagement. As, however, the balance had not inclined in favour of either nation, another combat took place in the sixth year, in the course of which, just as the battle was growing warm, day was on a sudden changed into night. This event had been foretold by Thales, the Milesian, who forewarned the Ionians of it, fixing for it the very year in which it actually took place.¹ The Medes and Lydians, when they observed the change, ceased fighting, and were alike anxious to have terms of peace agreed on. Syennesis² of Cilicia,³ and Labynetus⁴ of Babylon, were the persons who mediated between the parties, who hastened the taking of the oaths, and brought about the exchange of espousals. It was they who advised that Alyattes should give his daughter Aryênis in marriage to Astyages the son of Cyaxares, knowing, as they did, that without some sure bond of strong necessity, there is wont to be but little security in men's covenants. Oaths are taken by these people in the same way as by the Greeks, except that they make a slight flesh wound in their arms, from which each sucks a portion of the other's blood.⁵

75. Cyrus had captured this Astyages, who was his mother's father, and kept him prisoner, for a reason which I shall bring forward in another part of my history. This capture formed

¹ The prediction of this eclipse by Thales may fairly be classed with the prediction of a good olive-crop or of the fall of an *aërolite*. Thales, indeed, could only have obtained the requisite knowledge for predicting eclipses from the Chaldæans, and that the science of these astronomers, although sufficient for the investigation of lunar eclipses, did not enable them to calculate solar eclipses—dependent as such a calculation is, not only on the determination of the period of recurrence, but on the true projection also of the track of the sun's shadow along a particular line over the surface of the earth—may be inferred from our finding that in the astronomical canon of Ptolemy, which was compiled from the Chaldæan registers, the observations of the moon's eclipses are alone entered.

² The name Syennesis is common to all the kings of Cilicia mentioned in history. It has been supposed not to be really a name, but, like Pharaoh, a title.

³ Cilicia had become an independent state, either by the destruction of Assyria, or in the course of her decline after the reign of Esarhaddon. Previously, she had been included in the dominions of the Assyrian kings.

⁴ The Babylonian monarch at this time was either Nabopolassar or Nebuchadnezzar. Neither of these names is properly Hellenised by Labynetus. Labynetus is undoubtedly the Nabunahid of the inscriptions, the Nabonadius of the Canon, the Nabonnedus of Berosus and Megasthenes.

⁵ Vide *infra*, iv. 70, and Tacit. *Annal.* xii. 47.

the ground of quarrel between Cyrus and Crœsus, in consequence of which Crœsus sent his servants to ask the oracle if he should attack the Persians; and when an evasive answer came, fancying it to be in his favour, carried his arms into the Persian territory. When he reached the river Halys, he transported his army across it, as I maintain, by the bridges which exist there at the present day;¹ but, according to the general belief of the Greeks, by the aid of Thales the Milesian. The tale is, that Crœsus was in doubt how he should get his army across, as the bridges were not made at that time, and that Thales, who happened to be in the camp, divided the stream and caused it to flow on both sides of the army instead of on the left only. This he effected thus:—Beginning some distance above the camp, he dug a deep channel, which he brought round in a semicircle, so that it might pass to rearward of the camp; and that thus the river, diverted from its natural course into the new channel at the point where this left the stream, might flow by the station of the army, and afterwards fall again into the ancient bed. In this way the river was split into two streams, which were both easily fordable. It is said by some that the water was entirely drained off from the natural bed of the river. But I am of a different opinion; for I do not see how, in that case, they could have crossed it on their return.

76. Having passed the Halys with the forces under his command, Crœsus entered the district of Cappadocia which is called Pteria.² It lies in the neighbourhood of the city of Sinôpé³ upon the Euxine, and is the strongest position in the whole country thereabouts. Here Crœsus pitched his camp, and began to ravage the fields of the Syrians. He besieged and took the chief city of the Pterians, and reduced the inhabitants to slavery: he likewise made himself master of the surrounding villages. Thus he brought ruin on the Syrians, who were guilty

¹ The Halys (*Kızıl İrmak*) is fordable at no very great distance from its mouth, but bridges over it are not unfrequent. These are of a very simple construction, consisting of planks laid across a few slender beams, extending from bank to bank, without any parapet. Bridges with stone piers have existed at some former period, but they belong probably to Roman, and not to any earlier times. The ancient constructions mentioned by Herodotus are more likely to have been of the modern type.

² Pteria in Herodotus is a district, not a city.

³ Sinôpé, which recent events have once more made famous, was a colony of the Milesians, founded about B.C. 630 (*infra*, iv. 12). It occupied the neck of a small peninsula projecting into the Euxine towards the north-east, in lat. 42°, long. 35°, nearly. The ancient town has been completely ruined, and the modern is built of its fragments.

of no offence towards him. Meanwhile, Cyrus had levied an army and marched against Cræsus, increasing his numbers at every step by the forces of the nations that lay in his way. Before beginning his march he had sent heralds to the Ionians, with an invitation to them to revolt from the Lydian king: they, however, had refused compliance. Cyrus, notwithstanding, marched against the enemy, and encamped opposite them in the district of Pteria, where the trial of strength took place between the contending powers. The combat was hot and bloody, and upon both sides the number of the slain was great; nor had victory declared in favour of either party, when night came down upon the battle-field. Thus both armies fought valiantly.

77. Cræsus laid the blame of his ill success on the number of his troops, which fell very short of the enemy; and as on the next day Cyrus did not repeat the attack, he set off on his return to Sardis, intending to collect his allies and renew the contest in the spring. He meant to call on the Egyptians to send him aid, according to the terms of the alliance which he had concluded with Amasis,¹ previously to his league with the Lacedæmonians. He intended also to summon to his assistance the Babylonians, under their king Labynetus,² for they too were bound to him by treaty: and further, he meant to send word to Sparta, and appoint a day for the coming of their succours. Having got together these forces in addition to his own, he would, as soon as the winter was past and springtime come, march once more against the Persians. With these intentions Cræsus, immediately on his return, despatched heralds to his various allies, with a request that they would join him at Sardis in the course of the fifth month from the time of the departure of his messengers. He then disbanded the army—consisting of mercenary troops—which had been engaged with the Persians and had since accompanied him to his capital, and let them depart to their homes, never imagining that Cyrus, after a battle in which victory had been so evenly balanced, would venture to march upon Sardis.

¹ The treaty of Amasis with Cræsus would suffice to account for the hostility of the Persians against Egypt.

² Undoubtedly the Nabonadius of the Canon, and the Nabunahid of the monuments. The fact that it was with this monarch that Cræsus made his treaty helps greatly to fix the date of the fall of Sardis; it proves that that event *cannot have happened earlier* than B.C. 554. For Nabunahid did not ascend the throne till B.C. 555, and a full year must be allowed between the conclusion of the treaty and the taking of the Lydian capital.

78. While Cræsus was still in this mind, all the suburbs of Sardis were found to swarm with snakes, on the appearance of which the horses left feeding in the pasture-grounds, and flocked to the suburbs to eat them. The king, who witnessed the unusual sight, regarded it very rightly as a prodigy. He therefore instantly sent messengers to the soothsayers of Telmessus,¹ to consult them upon the matter. His messengers reached the city, and obtained from the Telmessians an explanation of what the prodigy portended, but fate did not allow them to inform their lord; for ere they entered Sardis on their return, Cræsus was a prisoner. What the Telmessians had declared was, that Cræsus must look for the entry of an army of foreign invaders into his country, and that when they came they would subdue the native inhabitants; since the snake, said they, is a child of earth, and the horse a warrior and a foreigner. Cræsus was already a prisoner when the Telmessians thus answered his inquiry, but they had no knowledge of what was taking place at Sardis, or of the fate of the monarch.

79. Cyrus, however, when Cræsus broke up so suddenly from his quarters after the battle at Pteria, conceiving that he had marched away with the intention of disbanding his army, considered a little, and soon saw that it was advisable for him to advance upon Sardis with all haste, before the Lydians could get their forces together a second time. Having thus determined, he lost no time in carrying out his plan. He marched forward with such speed that he was himself the first to announce his coming to the Lydian king. That monarch, placed in the utmost difficulty by the turn of events which had gone so entirely against all his calculations, nevertheless led out the Lydians to battle. In all Asia there was not at that time a braver or more warlike people. Their manner of fighting was on horseback; they carried long lances, and were clever in the management of their steeds.

80. The two armies met in the plain before Sardis. It is a vast flat, bare of trees, watered by the Hyllus and a number of other streams, which all flow into one larger than the rest called the Hermus.² This river rises in the sacred mountain of

¹ Three distinct cities of Asia Minor are called by this name. The *Lycian* Telmessus lay upon the coast occupying the site of the modern village of *Makri*, where are some curious remains, especially tombs, partly Greek, partly native Lycian.

² Sardis (the modern *Sart*) stood in the broad valley of the Hermus at a point where the hills approach each other more closely than in any other

the Dindymenian Mother,¹ and falls into the sea near the town of Phocæa.²

When Cyrus beheld the Lydians arranging themselves in order of battle on this plain, fearful of the strength of their cavalry, he adopted a device which Harpagus, one of the Medes, suggested to him. He collected together all the camels that had come in the train of his army to carry the provisions and the baggage, and taking off their loads, he mounted riders upon them accoutred as horsemen. These he commanded to advance in front of his other troops against the Lydian horse; behind them were to follow the foot soldiers, and last of all the cavalry. When his arrangements were complete, he gave his troops orders to slay all the other Lydians who came in their way without mercy, but to spare Cræsus and not kill him, even if he should be seized and offer resistance. The reason why Cyrus opposed his camels to the enemy's horse was, because the horse has a natural dread of the camel, and cannot abide either the sight or the smell of that animal. By this stratagem he hoped to make Cræsus's horse useless to him, the horse being what he chiefly depended on for victory. The two armies then joined battle, and immediately the Lydian war-horses, seeing and smelling the camels, turned round and galloped off; and so it came to pass that all Cræsus's hopes withered away. The Lydians, however, behaved manfully. As soon as they understood what was happening, they leaped off their horses, and engaged with the Persians on foot. The combat was long; but at last, after a great slaughter on both sides, the Lydians turned and fled. They were driven within their walls, and the Persians laid siege to Sardis.

81. Thus the siege began. Meanwhile Cræsus, thinking that the place would hold out no inconsiderable time, sent off fresh heralds to his allies from the beleaguered town. His former messengers had been charged to bid them assemble at Sardis in the course of the fifth month; they whom he now sent were to say that he was already besieged, and to beseech them to come to his aid with all possible speed. Among his other allies Cræsus did not omit to send to Lacedæmon.

place. Some vestiges of the ancient town remain, but, except the ruins of the great temple of Cybêlé (infra, v. 102), they seem to be of a late date.

¹ The Dindymenian mother was Cybêlé, the special deity of Phrygia.

² The Hermus (*Ghiediz-Chai*) now falls into the sea very much nearer to Smyrna than to Phocæa. Its course is perpetually changing.

82. It chanced, however, that the Spartans were themselves just at this time engaged in a quarrel with the Argives about a place called Thyrea,¹ which was within the limits of Argolis, but had been seized on by the Lacedæmonians. Indeed, the whole country westward, as far as Cape Malea, belonged once to the Argives, and not only that entire tract upon the mainland, but also Cythêra, and the other islands. The Argives collected troops to resist the seizure of Thyrea, but before any battle was fought, the two parties came to terms, and it was agreed that three hundred Spartans and three hundred Argives should meet and fight for the place, which should belong to the nation with whom the victory rested. It was stipulated also that the other troops on each side should return home to their respective countries, and not remain to witness the combat, as there was danger, if the armies stayed, that either the one or the other, on seeing their countrymen undergoing defeat, might hasten to their assistance. These terms being agreed on, the two armies marched off, leaving three hundred picked men on each side to fight for the territory. The battle began, and so equal were the combatants, that at the close of the day, when night put a stop to the fight, of the whole six hundred only three men remained alive, two Argives, Alcanor and Chromius, and a single Spartan, Othryadas. The two Argives, regarding themselves as the victors, hurried to Argos. Othryadas, the Spartan, remained upon the field, and, stripping the bodies of the Argives who had fallen, carried their armour to the Spartan camp. Next day the two armies returned to learn the result. At first they disputed, both parties claiming the victory, the one, because they had the greater number of survivors; the other, because their man remained on the field, and stripped the bodies of the slain, whereas the two men of the other side ran away; but at last they fell from words to blows, and a battle was fought, in which both parties suffered great loss, but at the end the Lacedæmonians gained the victory. Upon this the Argives, who up to that time had worn their hair long, cut it off close, and made a law, to which they attached a curse binding themselves never more to let their hair grow, and never to allow their women to wear gold, until they should recover Thyrea. At the same time the Lacedæmonians made a law the very reverse of this, namely, to wear their hair long, though

¹ Thyrea was the chief town of the district called Cynuria, the border territory between Laconia and Argolis (cf. Thucyd. v. 41).

they had always before cut it close. Othryadas himself, it is said, the sole survivor of the three hundred, prevented by a sense of shame from returning to Sparta after all his comrades had fallen, laid violent hands upon himself in Thyrea.

83. Although the Spartans were engaged with these matters when the herald arrived from Sardis to entreat them to come to the assistance of the besieged king, yet, notwithstanding, they instantly set to work to afford him help. They had completed their preparations, and the ships were just ready to start, when a second message informed them that the place had already fallen, and that Crœsus was a prisoner. Deeply grieved at his misfortune, the Spartans ceased their efforts.

84. The following is the way in which Sardis was taken. On the fourteenth day of the siege Cyrus bade some horsemen ride about his lines, and make proclamation to the whole army that he would give a reward to the man who should first mount the wall. After this he made an assault, but without success. His troops retired, but a certain Mardian, Hyrcæades by name, resolved to approach the citadel and attempt it at a place where no guards were ever set. On this side the rock was so precipitous, and the citadel (as it seemed) so impregnable, that no fear was entertained of its being carried in this place. Here was the only portion of the circuit round which their old king Meles did not carry the lion which his leman bore to him. For when the Telmessians had declared that if the lion were taken round the defences, Sardis would be impregnable, and Meles, in consequence, carried it round the rest of the fortress where the citadel seemed open to attack, he scorned to take it round this side, which he looked on as a sheer precipice, and therefore absolutely secure. It is on that side of the city which faces Mount Tmolus. Hyrcæades, however, having the day before observed a Lydian soldier descend the rock after a helmet that had rolled down from the top, and having seen him pick it up and carry it back, thought over what he had witnessed, and formed his plan. He climbed the rock himself, and other Persians followed in his track, until a large number had mounted to the top. Thus was Sardis taken,¹ and given up entirely to pillage.

85. With respect to Crœsus himself, this is what befell him at the taking of the town. He had a son, of whom I made

¹ Sardis was taken a second time in almost exactly the same way by Lagoras, one of the generals of Antiochus the Great.

mention above, a worthy youth, whose only defect was that he was deaf and dumb. In the days of his prosperity Cræsus had done the utmost that he could for him, and among other plans which he had devised, had sent to Delphi to consult the oracle on his behalf. The answer which he had received from the Pythoness ran thus:—

Lydian, wide-ruling monarch, thou wondrous simple Cræsus,
Wish not ever to hear in thy palace the voice thou hast prayed for,
Uttering intelligent sounds. Far better thy son should be silent!
Ah! woe worth the day when thine ear shall first list to his accents.

When the town was taken, one of the Persians was just going to kill Cræsus, not knowing who he was. Cræsus saw the man coming, but under the pressure of his affliction, did not care to avoid the blow, not minding whether or no he died beneath the stroke. Then this son of his, who was voiceless, beholding the Persian as he rushed towards Cræsus, in the agony of his fear and grief burst into speech, and said, "Man, do not kill Cræsus." This was the first time that he had ever spoken a word, but afterwards he retained the power of speech for the remainder of his life.

86. Thus was Sardis taken by the Persians, and Cræsus himself fell into their hands, after having reigned fourteen years, and been besieged in his capital fourteen days; thus too did Cræsus fulfil the oracle, which said that he should destroy a mighty empire,—by destroying his own. Then the Persians who had made Cræsus prisoner brought him before Cyrus. Now a vast pile had been raised by his orders, and Cræsus, laden with fetters, was placed upon it, and with him twice seven of the sons of the Lydians. I know not whether Cyrus was minded to make an offering of the first-fruits to some god or other, or whether he had vowed a vow and was performing it, or whether, as may well be, he had heard that Cræsus was a holy man, and so wished to see if any of the heavenly powers would appear to save him from being burnt alive. However it might be, Cyrus was thus engaged, and Cræsus was already on the pile, when it entered his mind in the depth of his woe that there was a divine warning in the words which had come to him from the lips of Solon, "No one while he lives is happy." When this thought smote him he fetched a long breath, and breaking his deep silence, groaned out aloud, thrice uttering the name of Solon. Cyrus caught the sounds, and bade the interpreters inquire of Cræsus who it was he called on. They drew

near and asked him, but he held his peace, and for a long time made no answer to their questionings, until at length, forced to say something, he exclaimed, "One I would give much to see converse with every monarch." Not knowing what he meant by this reply, the interpreters begged him to explain himself; and as they pressed for an answer, and grew to be troublesome, he told them how, a long time before, Solon, an Athenian, had come and seen all his splendour, and made light of it; and how whatever he had said to him had fallen out exactly as he fore-showed, although it was nothing that especially concerned him, but applied to all mankind alike, and most to those who seemed to themselves happy. Meanwhile, as he thus spoke, the pile was lighted, and the outer portion began to blaze. Then Cyrus, hearing from the interpreters what Cræsus had said, relented, bethinking himself that he too was a man, and that it was a fellow-man, and one who had once been as blessed by fortune as himself, that he was burning alive; afraid, moreover, of retribution, and full of the thought that whatever is human is insecure. So he bade them quench the blazing fire as quickly as they could, and take down Cræsus and the other Lydians, which they tried to do, but the flames were not to be mastered.

87. Then, the Lydians say that Cræsus, perceiving by the efforts made to quench the fire that Cyrus had relented, and seeing also that all was in vain, and that the men could not get the fire under, called with a loud voice upon the god Apollo, and prayed him, if he had ever received at his hands any acceptable gift, to come to his aid, and deliver him from his present danger. As thus with tears he besought the god, suddenly, though up to that time the sky had been clear and the day without a breath of wind,¹ dark clouds gathered, and the storm burst over their heads with rain of such violence, that the flames were speedily extinguished. Cyrus, convinced by this that Cræsus was a good man and a favourite of heaven, asked him after he was taken off the pile, "Who it was that had persuaded him to lead an army into his country, and so become his foe rather than continue his friend?" to which Cræsus made answer as follows: "What I did, oh! king, was to thy advantage and to my own loss. If there be blame, it rests with the god of the Greeks, who encouraged me to begin the war. No one is so foolish as to prefer war to peace, in

¹ The later romancers regarded this incident as over-marvellous, and softened down the miracle considerably.

which, instead of sons burying their fathers, fathers bury their sons. But the gods willed it so.”¹

88. Thus did Cræsus speak. Cyrus then ordered his fetters to be taken off, and made him sit down near himself, and paid him much respect, looking upon him, as did also the courtiers with a sort of wonder. Cræsus, wrapped in thought, uttered no word. After a while, happening to turn and perceive the Persian soldiers engaged in plundering the town, he said to Cyrus, “May I now tell thee, oh! king, what I have in my mind, or is silence best?” Cyrus bade him speak his mind boldly. Then he put this question: “What is it, oh! Cyrus, which those men yonder are doing so busily?” “Plundering thy city,” Cyrus answered, “and carrying off thy riches.” “Not my city,” rejoined the other, “nor my riches. They are not mine any more. It is thy wealth which they are pillaging.”

89. Cyrus, struck by what Cræsus had said, bade all the court to withdraw, and then asked Cræsus what he thought it best for him to do as regarded the plundering. Cræsus answered, “Now that the gods have made me thy slave, oh! Cyrus, it seems to me that it is my part, if I see anything to thy advantage, to show it to thee. Thy subjects, the Persians, are a poor people with a proud spirit. If then thou lettest them pillage and possess themselves of great wealth, I will tell thee what thou hast to expect at their hands. The man who gets the most, look to having him rebel against thee. Now then, if my words please thee, do thus, oh! king:—Let some of thy bodyguards be placed as sentinels at each of the city gates, and let them take their booty from the soldiers as they leave the town, and tell them that they do so because the tenths are due to Jupiter. So wilt thou escape the hatred they would feel if the plunder were taken away from them by force; and they, seeing that what is proposed is just, will do it willingly.”

90. Cyrus was beyond measure pleased with this advice, so

¹ Modern critics seem not to have been the first to object to this entire narrative, that the religion of the Persians did not allow the burning of human beings (*vide infra*, iii. 16). The objection had evidently been made before the time of Nicolas of Damascus, who meets it indirectly in his narrative. The Persians (he gives us to understand) had for some time before this neglected the precepts of Zoroaster, and allowed his ordinances with respect to fire to fall into desuetude. The miracle whereby Cræsus was snatched from the flames reminded them of their ancient creed, and induced them to re-establish the whole system of Zoroaster. It may be doubted, however, whether the system of Zoroaster was at this time any portion of the Persian religion.

excellent did it seem to him. He praised Cræsus highly, and gave orders to his body-guard to do as he had suggested. Then, turning to Cræsus, he said, "Oh! Cræsus, I see that thou art resolved both in speech and act to show thyself a virtuous prince: ask me, therefore, whatever thou wilt as a gift at this moment." Cræsus replied, "Oh! my lord, if thou wilt suffer me to send these fetters to the god of the Greeks, whom I once honoured above all other gods, and ask him if it is his wont to deceive his benefactors,—that will be the highest favour thou canst confer on me." Cyrus upon this inquired what charge he had to make against the god. Then Cræsus gave him a full account of all his projects, and of the answers of the oracle, and of the offerings which he had sent, on which he dwelt especially, and told him how it was the encouragement given him by the oracle which had led him to make war upon Persia. All this he related, and at the end again besought permission to reproach the god with his behaviour. Cyrus answered with a laugh, "This I readily grant thee, and whatever else thou shalt at any time ask at my hands." Cræsus, finding his request allowed, sent certain Lydians to Delphi, enjoining them to lay his fetters upon the threshold of the temple, and ask the god, "If he were not ashamed of having encouraged him, as the destined destroyer of the empire of Cyrus, to begin a war with Persia, of which such were the first-fruits?" As they said this they were to point to the fetters; and further they were to inquire, "if it was the wont of the Greek gods to be ungrateful?"

91. The Lydians went to Delphi and delivered their message, on which the Pythoness is said to have replied—"It is not possible even for a god to escape the decree of destiny. Cræsus has been punished for the sin of his fifth ancestor,¹ who, when he was one of the body-guard of the Heraclides, joined in a woman's fraud, and, slaying his master, wrongfully seized the throne. Apollo was anxious that the fall of Sardis should not happen in the lifetime of Cræsus, but he delayed to his son's days; he could not, however, persuade the Fates. All that they were willing to allow he took and gave to Cræsus. Let Cræsus know that Apollo delayed the taking of Sardis three full years, and that he is thus a prisoner three years later than was his destiny. Moreover it was Apollo who saved him from the burning pile. Nor has Cræsus any right to complain with respect to the oracular answer which he received. For when the god

¹ Vide supra, ch. 13.

told him that, if he attacked the Persians, he would destroy a mighty empire, he ought, if he had been wise, to have sent again and inquired which empire was meant, that of Cyrus or his own; but if he neither understood what was said, nor took the trouble to seek for enlightenment, he has only himself to blame for the result. Besides, he had misunderstood the last answer which had been given him about the mule. Cyrus was that mule. For the parents of Cyrus were of different races, and of different conditions,—his mother a Median princess, daughter of King Astyages, and his father a Persian and a subject, who, though so far beneath her in all respects, had married his royal mistress.”

Such was the answer of the Pythoness. The Lydians returned to Sardis and communicated it to Cræsus, who confessed, on hearing it, that the fault was his, not the god's. Such was the way in which Ionia was first conquered, and so was the empire of Cræsus brought to a close.

92. Besides the offerings which have been already mentioned, there are many others in various parts of Greece presented by Cræsus; as at Thebes in Bœotia, where there is a golden tripod, dedicated by him to Ismenian Apollo;¹ at Ephesus, where the golden heifers, and most of the columns are his gift; and at Delphi, in the temple of Pronaia,² where there is a huge shield in gold, which he gave. All these offerings were still in existence in my day; many others have perished: among them those which he dedicated at Branchidæ in Milesia, equal in weight, as I am informed, and in all respects like to those at Delphi. The Delphian presents, and those sent to Amphiaraüs, came from his own private property, being the first-fruits of the fortune which he inherited from his father; his other offerings came from the riches of an enemy, who, before he mounted the throne, headed a party against him, with the view of obtaining the crown of Lydia for Pantaleon. This Pantaleon was a son of Alyattes, but by a different mother from Cræsus; for the mother of Cræsus was a Carian woman, but the mother of

¹ The river Ismênus washed the foot of the hill on which this temple stood (Paus. ix. 10, 2); hence the phrase “Ismenian Apollo.”

² The temple of Minerva at Delphi stood in front of the great temple of Apollo. Hence the Delphian Minerva was called Minerva Pronaia (*διὰ τὸ πρὸ τοῦ ναοῦ ἰδρῦσθαι*, as Harpocration says). Vide *infra*, viii. 37. Pausanias mentions that the shield was no longer there in his day. It had been carried off by Philomêlus, the Phocian general in the Sacred War (Paus. x. viii. § 4).

Pantaleon an Ionian. When, by the appointment of his father, Cræsus obtained the kingly dignity,¹ he seized the man who had plotted against him, and broke him upon the wheel. His property, which he had previously devoted to the service of the gods, Cræsus applied in the way mentioned above. This is all I shall say about his offerings.

93. Lydia, unlike most other countries, scarcely offers any wonders for the historian to describe, except the gold-dust which is washed down from the range of Tmolus. It has, however, one structure of enormous size, only inferior to the monuments of Egypt² and Babylon. This is the tomb of Alyattes,³ the father of Cræsus, the base of which is formed of immense blocks of stone, the rest being a vast mound of earth. It was raised by the joint labour of the tradesmen, handicraftsmen, and courtesans of Sardis, and had at the top five stone pillars, which remained to my day, with inscriptions cut on them, showing

¹ This has been supposed to mean that Alyattes associated Cræsus with him in the government. But there are no sufficient grounds for such an opinion. Association, common enough in Egypt, was very rarely practised in the East until the time of the Sassanian princes; and does not seem ever to obtain unless where the succession is doubtful.

² The colossal size of the monuments in Egypt is sufficiently known. They increased in size as the power of Egypt advanced. The taste for colossal statues is often supposed to be peculiarly Egyptian; but the Greeks had some as large as, and even larger than, any in Egypt.

³ The following account of the external appearance of this monument, which still exists on the north bank of the Hermus, near the ruins of the ancient Sardis, is given by Mr. Hamilton (*Asia Minor*, vol. i. pp. 145-6):—"One mile south of this spot we reached the principal tumulus, generally designated as the tomb of Halyattes. It took us about ten minutes to ride round its base, which would give it a circumference of nearly half a mile. Towards the north it consists of the natural rock, a white horizontally-stratified earthy limestone, cut away so as to appear as part of the structure. The upper portion is sand and gravel, apparently brought from the bed of the Hermus. Several deep ravines have been worn by time and weather in its sides, particularly on that to the south: we followed one of these as affording a better footing than the smooth grass, as we ascended to the summit. Here we found the remains of a foundation nearly eighteen feet square, on the north of which was a huge circular stone, ten feet in diameter, with a flat bottom and a raised edge or lip, evidently placed there as an ornament on the apex of the tumulus. Herodotus says that phalli were erected upon the summit of some of these tumuli, of which this may be one; but Mr. Strickland supposes that a rude representation of the human face might be traced on its weather-beaten surface. In consequence of the ground sloping to the south, this tumulus appears much higher when viewed from the side of Sardis than from any other. It rises at an angle of about 22°, and is a conspicuous object on all sides."

Besides the barrow of Alyattes there are a vast number of ancient tumuli on the shores of the Gygaean lake. Three or four of these are scarcely inferior in size to that of Alyattes.

how much of the work was done by each class of workpeople. It appeared on measurement that the portion of the courtesans was the largest. The daughters of the common people in Lydia, one and all, pursue this traffic, wishing to collect money for their portions. They continue the practice till they marry; and are wont to contract themselves in marriage. The tomb is six stades and two plethra in circumference; its breadth is thirteen plethra. Close to the tomb is a large lake, which the Lydians say is never dry.¹ They call it the Lake Gygæa.

94. The Lydians have very nearly the same customs as the Greeks, with the exception that these last do not bring up their girls in the same way. So far as we have any knowledge, they were the first nation to introduce the use of gold and silver coin,² and the first who sold goods by retail. They claim also the invention of all the games which are common to them with the Greeks. These they declare that they invented about the time when they colonised Tyrrenia, an event of which they give the following account. In the days of Atys the son of Manes, there was great scarcity through the whole land of Lydia. For some time the Lydians bore the affliction patiently, but finding that it did not pass away, they set to work to devise remedies for the evil. Various expedients were discovered by various persons; dice, and huckle-bones, and ball,³ and all such games were invented, except tables, the invention of which they do not claim as theirs. The plan adopted against the famine was to engage in games one day so entirely as not to feel any craving for food, and the next day to eat and abstain from games. In this way they passed eighteen years. Still the affliction continued and even became more grievous. So the king determined to divide the nation in half, and to make the two portions draw lots, the one to stay, the other to leave the land. He would continue to reign over those whose lot it should be to remain behind; the emigrants should have his son Tyrhênus for their leader. The lot was cast, and they who had to emigrate went down to Smyrna, and built themselves ships, in which, after they had put on board all needful stores, they sailed away in search of new homes and better sustenance.

¹ This lake is still a remarkable feature in the scene.

² It is probable that the Greeks derived their first knowledge of coined money from the Asiatics with whom they came into contact in Asia Minor.

³ The ball was a very old game, and it was doubtless invented in Egypt, as Plato says. It is mentioned by Homer (*Od.* viii. 372), and it was known in Egypt long before his time, in the twelfth dynasty.

After sailing past many countries they came to Umbria,¹ where they built cities for themselves, and fixed their residence. Their former name of Lydians they laid aside, and called themselves after the name of the king's son, who led the colony, Tyrrhenians.

95. Thus far I have been engaged in showing how the Lydians were brought under the Persian yoke. The course of my history now compels me to inquire who this Cyrus was by whom the Lydian empire was destroyed, and by what means the Persians had become the lords paramount of Asia. And herein I shall follow those Persian authorities whose object it appears to be not to magnify the exploits of Cyrus, but to relate the simple truth. I know besides three ways in which the story of Cyrus is told, all differing from my own narrative.

The Assyrians had held the Empire of Upper Asia for the space of five hundred and twenty years, when the Medes set the example of revolt from their authority. They took arms for the recovery of their freedom, and fought a battle with the Assyrians, in which they behaved with such gallantry as to shake off the yoke of servitude, and to become a free people. Upon their success the other nations also revolted and regained their independence.

96. Thus the nations over that whole extent of country obtained the blessing of self-government, but they fell again under the sway of kings, in the manner which I will now relate. There was a certain Mede named Deioces, son of Phraortes, a man of much wisdom, who had conceived the desire of obtaining to himself the sovereign power. In furtherance of his ambition, therefore, he formed and carried into execution the following scheme. As the Medes at that time dwelt in scattered villages without any central authority, and lawlessness in consequence prevailed throughout the land, Deioces, who was already a man of mark in his own village, applied himself with greater zeal and earnestness than ever before to the practice of justice among his fellows. It was his conviction that justice and injustice are engaged in perpetual war with one another. He therefore began this course of conduct, and presently the men of his village, observing his integrity, chose him to be the arbiter of all their disputes. Bent on obtaining the sovereign power, he showed himself an honest and an upright judge, and by these means gained such credit with his fellow-citizens as to attract

¹ The Umbria of Herodotus appears to include almost the whole of Northern Italy.

the attention of those who lived in the surrounding villages. They had long been suffering from unjust and oppressive judgments; so that, when they heard of the singular uprightness of Deioces, and of the equity of his decisions, they joyfully had recourse to him in the various quarrels and suits that arose, until at last they came to put confidence in no one else.

97. The number of complaints brought before him continually increasing, as people learnt more and more the fairness of his judgments, Deioces, feeling himself now all important, announced that he did not intend any longer to hear causes, and appeared no more in the seat in which he had been accustomed to sit and administer justice. "It did not square with his interests," he said, "to spend the whole day in regulating other men's affairs to the neglect of his own." Hereupon robbery and lawlessness broke out afresh, and prevailed through the country even more than heretofore; wherefore the Medes assembled from all quarters, and held a consultation on the state of affairs. The speakers, as I think, were chiefly friends of Deioces. "We cannot possibly," they said, "go on living in this country if things continue as they now are; let us therefore set a king over us, that so the land may be well governed, and we ourselves may be able to attend to our own affairs, and not be forced to quit our country on account of anarchy." The assembly was persuaded by these arguments, and resolved to appoint a king.

98. It followed to determine who should be chosen to the office. When this debate began the claims of Deioces and his praises were at once in every mouth; so that presently all agreed that he should be king. Upon this he required a palace to be built for him suitable to his rank, and a guard to be given him for his person. The Medes complied, and built him a strong and large palace,¹ on a spot which he himself pointed out, and likewise gave him liberty to choose himself a body-guard from the whole nation. Thus settled upon the throne, he further required them to build a single great city, and, disregarding the petty towns in which they had formerly dwelt, make the new capital the object of their chief attention. The Medes were again obedient, and built the city now called Agbatana,² the walls of which are of great size and strength,

¹ The royal palace at Agbatana is said by Polybius to have been 7 stades (more than four-fifths of a mile) in circumference.

² There is every reason to believe that the original form of the name

rising in circles one within the other. The plan of the place is, that each of the walls should out-top the one beyond it by the battlements. The nature of the ground, which is a gentle hill, favours this arrangement in some degree, but it was mainly effected by art. The number of the circles is seven, the royal palace and the treasuries standing within the last. The circuit of the outer wall is very nearly the same with that of Athens. Of this wall the battlements are white,¹ of the next black, of the third scarlet, of the fourth blue, of the fifth orange; all these are coloured with paint. The two last have their battlements coated respectively with silver and gold.²

99. All these fortifications Deioces caused to be raised for himself and his own palace. The people were required to build their dwellings outside the circuit of the walls. When the town was finished, he proceeded to arrange the ceremonial. He allowed no one to have direct access to the person of the king, but made all communication pass through the hands of messengers, and forbade the king to be seen by his subjects. He also made it an offence for any one whatsoever to laugh or spit in the royal presence. This ceremonial, of which he was the first inventor, Deioces established for his own security, fearing that his compeers, who were brought up together with him, and were of as good family as he, and no whit inferior to him in many qualities, if they saw him frequently would be pained at the sight, and would therefore be likely to conspire against him; whereas if they did not see him, they would think him quite a different sort of being from themselves.

100. After completing these arrangements, and firmly settling himself upon the throne, Deioces continued to administer justice with the same strictness as before. Causes were stated in

Hellenised as *Ἀγβάτανα* or *Ἐκβάτανα* was *Hagmatán*, and that it was of Arian etymology, having been first used by the Arian Medes. It would signify in the language of the country "the place of assemblage."

¹ "This is manifestly a fable of Sabæan origin, the seven colours mentioned by Herodotus being precisely those employed by the Orientals to denote the seven great heavenly bodies, or the seven climates in which they revolve. The great temple of Nebuchadnezzar at Borsippa (the modern *Birs-Nimrud*) was a building in seven platforms coloured in a similar way.

² There is reason to believe that this account, though it may be greatly exaggerated, is not devoid of a foundation. The temple at Borsippa (see the preceding note) appears to have had its fourth and seventh stages actually coated with gold and silver respectively. And it seems certain that there was often in Oriental towns a most lavish display of the two precious metals.

writing, and sent in to the king, who passed his judgment upon the contents, and transmitted his decisions to the parties concerned: besides which he had spies and eavesdroppers in all parts of his dominions, and if he heard of any act of oppression, he sent for the guilty party, and awarded him the punishment meet for his offence.

101. Thus Deioces collected the Medes into a nation, and ruled over them alone. Now these are the tribes of which they consist: the Busæ, the Parêtacêni, the Struchates, the Arizanti, the Budii, and the Magi.

102. Having reigned three-and-fifty years, Deioces was at his death succeeded by his son Phraortes. This prince, not satisfied with a dominion which did not extend beyond the single nation of the Medes, began by attacking the Persians; and marching an army into their country, brought them under the Median yoke before any other people. After this success, being now at the head of two nations, both of them powerful, he proceeded to conquer Asia, overrunning province after province. At last he engaged in war with the Assyrians—those Assyrians, I mean, to whom Nineveh belonged,¹ who were formerly the lords of Asia. At present they stood alone by the revolt and desertion of their allies, yet still their internal condition was as flourishing as ever. Phraortes attacked them, but perished in the expedition with the greater part of his army, after having reigned over the Medes two-and-twenty years.

103. On the death of Phraortes his son Cyaxares ascended the throne. Of him it is reported that he was still more warlike than any of his ancestors, and that he was the first who gave organisation to an Asiatic army, dividing the troops into companies, and forming distinct bodies of the spearmen, the archers, and the cavalry, who before his time had been mingled in one mass, and confused together. He it was who fought against the Lydians on the occasion when the day was changed suddenly into night, and who brought under his dominion the whole of Asia beyond the Halys.² This prince, collecting together all the nations which owned his sway, marched against Nineveh, resolved to avenge his father, and cherishing a hope that he might succeed in taking the town. A battle was fought,

¹ Herodotus intends here to distinguish the Assyrians of Assyria Proper from the Babylonians, whom he calls also Assyrians (i. 178, 188, etc.). Against the latter he means to say this expedition was not directed.

² Vide supra, chapter 74.

in which the Assyrians suffered a defeat, and Cyaxares had already begun the siege of the place, when a numerous horde of Scyths, under their king Madyes,¹ son of Prôtothyas, burst into Asia in pursuit of the Cimmerians whom they had driven out of Europe, and entered the Median territory.

104. The distance from the Palus Mæotis to the river Phasis and the Colchians is thirty days' journey for a lightly-equipped traveller.² From Colchis to cross into Media does not take long—there is only a single intervening nation, the Sasprians,³ passing whom you find yourself in Media. This however was not the road followed by the Scythians, who turned out of the straight course, and took the upper route, which is much longer, keeping the Caucasus upon their right.⁴ The Scythians, having thus invaded Media, were opposed by the Medes, who gave them battle, but, being defeated, lost their empire. The Scythians became masters of Asia.

105. After this they marched forward with the design of invading Egypt. When they had reached Palestine, however, Psammetichus the Egyptian king met them with gifts and prayers, and prevailed on them to advance no further. On their return, passing through Ascalon, a city of Syria,⁵ the greater part of them went their way without doing any damage; but some few who lagged behind pillaged the temple of Celestial Venus.⁶ I have inquired and find that the temple at Ascalon is the most ancient of all the temples to this goddess; for the one in Cyprus, as the Cyprians themselves admit, was built in imita-

¹ According to Strabo, Madys, or Madyes, was a Cimmerian prince who drove the Treres out of Asia.

² From the mouth of the Palus Mæotis, or Sea of Azof, to the river *Rion*, (the ancient Phasis) is a distance of about 270 geographical miles, or but little more than the distance (240 geog. miles) from the gulf of Issus to the Euxine, which was called (ch. 72) "a journey of *five* days for a lightly-equipped traveller." We may learn from this that Herodotus did not intend the day's journey for a measure of length.

³ The Sasprians are mentioned again as lying north of Media (ch. 110), and as separating Media from Colchis (iv. 37).

⁴ Herodotus, clearly, conceives the Cimmerians to have coasted the Black Sea, and appears to have thought that the Scythians entered Asia by the route of Daghestán, along the shores of the Caspian.

⁵ Ascalon was one of the most ancient cities of the Philistines (Judges i. 18, xiv. 19, etc.). Ascalon is first mentioned in cuneiform inscriptions of the time of Sennacherib, having been reduced by him in the famous campaign of his third year.

⁶ Herodotus probably intends the Syrian goddess Atergatis or Derceto, who was worshipped at Ascalon and elsewhere in Syria, under the form of a mermaid, or figure half woman half fish. She may be identified with Astarté, and therefore with the Venus of the Greeks.

tion of it; and that in Cythêra was erected by the Phœnicians, who belong to this part of Syria. The Scythians who plundered the temple were punished by the goddess with the female sickness, which still attaches to their posterity. They themselves confess that they are afflicted with the disease for this reason, and travellers who visit Scythia can see what sort of a disease it is. Those who suffer from it are called Enarees.

106. The dominion of the Scythians over Asia lasted eight-and-twenty years, during which time their insolence and oppression spread ruin on every side. For besides the regular tribute, they exacted from the several nations additional imposts, which they fixed at pleasure; and further, they scoured the country and plundered every one of whatever they could. At length Cyaxares and the Medes invited the greater part of them to a banquet, and made them drunk with wine, after which they were all massacred. The Medes then recovered their empire, and had the same extent of dominion as before. They took Nineveh—I will relate how in another history—and conquered all Assyria except the district of Babylonia. After this Cyaxares died, having reigned over the Medes, if we include the time of the Scythian rule, forty years.

107. Astyages, the son of Cyaxares, succeeded to the throne. He had a daughter who was named Mandané, concerning whom he had a wonderful dream. He dreamt that from her such a stream of water flowed forth as not only to fill his capital, but to flood the whole of Asia. This vision he laid before such of the Magi as had the gift of interpreting dreams, who expounded its meaning to him in full, whereat he was greatly terrified. On this account, when his daughter was now of ripe age, he would not give her in marriage to any of the Medes who were of suitable rank, lest the dream should be accomplished; but he married her to a Persian of good family indeed,¹ but of a quiet

¹ Cambyses, the father of Cyrus, appears to have been not only a man of good family, but of royal race—the hereditary monarch of his nation, which, when it became subject to the Medes, still retained its line of native kings, the descendants of Achæmenes (Hakhâmanish). In the Behistun Inscription (col. i, par. 4) Darius carries up his genealogy to Achæmenes, and asserts that “eight of his race had been kings before himself—he was the ninth.” Cambyses, the father of Cyrus, Cyrus himself, and Cambyses the son of Cyrus, are probably included in the eight. An inscription has been found upon a brick at *Senkereh* in lower Chaldæa, in which Cyrus the Great calls himself “the son of Cambyses, the powerful king.” This then is decisive as to the royalty of the line of Cyrus the Great, and is confirmatory of the impression derived from other evidence, that when Darius speaks of eight Achæmenian kings having preceded him, he

temper, whom he looked on as much inferior to a Mede of even middle condition.

108. Thus Cambyses (for so was the Persian called) wedded Mandané,¹ and took her to his home, after which, in the very first year, Astyages saw another vision. He fancied that a vine grew from the womb of his daughter, and overshadowed the whole of Asia. After this dream, which he submitted also to the interpreters, he sent to Persia and fetched away Mandané, who was now with child, and was not far from her time. On her arrival he set a watch over her, intending to destroy the child to which she should give birth; for the Magian interpreters had expounded the vision to foreshow that the offspring of his daughter would reign over Asia in his stead. To guard against this, Astyages, as soon as Cyrus was born, sent for Harpagus, a man of his own house and the most faithful of the Medes, to whom he was wont to entrust all his affairs, and addressed him thus—"Harpagus, I beseech thee neglect not the business with which I am about to charge thee; neither betray thou the interests of thy lord for others' sake, lest thou bring destruction on thine own head at some future time. Take the child born of Mandané my daughter; carry him with thee to thy home and slay him there. Then bury him as thou wilt." "Oh! king," replied the other, "never in time past did Harpagus disoblige thee in anything, and be sure that through all future time he will be careful in nothing to offend. If therefore it be thy will that this thing be done, it is for me to serve thee with all diligence."

109. When Harpagus had thus answered, the child was given into his hands, clothed in the garb of death, and he hastened weeping to his home. There on his arrival he found his wife, to whom he told all that Astyages had said. "What then," said she, "is it now in thy heart to do?" "Not what Astyages requires," he answered; "no, he may be madder and more frantic still than he is now, but I will not be the man to work his will, or lend a helping hand to such a murder as this. Many things forbid my slaying him. In the first place the boy is my own kith and kin; and next Astyages is old, and has no son."² alludes to the ancestry of Cyrus the Great, and not to his own immediate paternal line.

¹ Whether there was really any connection of blood between Cyrus and Astyages, or whether they were no way related to one another, will perhaps never be determined.

² Xenophon (Cyrop. I. iv. § 20) gives Astyages a son, whom he calls Cyaxares. The inscriptions tend to confirm Herodotus.

If then when he dies the crown should go to his daughter—that daughter whose child he now wishes to slay by my hand—what remains for me but danger of the fearfullest kind? For my own safety, indeed, the child must die; but some one belonging to Astyages must take his life, not I or mine.”

110. So saying he sent off a messenger to fetch a certain Mitradates,¹ one of the herdsmen of Astyages, whose pasturages he knew to be the fittest for his purpose, lying as they did among mountains infested with wild beasts. This man was married to one of the king's female slaves, whose Median name was Spaco, which is in Greek Cyno, since in the Median tongue the word “Spaca” means a bitch. The mountains, on the skirts of which his cattle grazed, lie to the north of Agbatana, towards the Euxine. That part of Media which borders on the Sasprians is an elevated tract, very mountainous, and covered with forests, while the rest of the Median territory is entirely level ground. On the arrival of the herdsman, who came at the hasty summons, Harpagus said to him—“Astyages requires thee to take this child and lay him in the wildest part of the hills, where he will be sure to die speedily. And he bade me tell thee, that if thou dost not kill the boy, but anyhow allowest him to escape, he will put thee to the most painful of deaths. I myself am appointed to see the child exposed.”

111. The herdsman on hearing this took the child in his arms, and went back the way he had come till he reached the folds. There, providentially, his wife, who had been expecting daily to be put to bed, had just, during the absence of her husband, been delivered of a child. Both the herdsman and his wife were uneasy on each other's account, the former fearful because his wife was so near her time, the woman alarmed because it was a new thing for her husband to be sent for by Harpagus. When therefore he came into the house upon his return, his wife, seeing him arrive so unexpectedly, was the first to speak, and begged to know why Harpagus had sent for him in such a hurry. “Wife,” said he, “when I got to the town I saw and heard such things as I would to heaven I had never seen—such things as I would to heaven had never happened to

¹ Ctesias seems to have called this person Atradata. Atradata may fairly be considered to be a mere Median synonym for the Persian Mitradates—the name signifying “given to the sun,” and *Aira* or *Adar* (whence Atropatêné) being equivalent in Median, as a title of that luminary (or of fire, which was the usual emblem of his worship) to the Persian *Mitra* or *Mîhr*.

our masters. Every one was weeping in Harpagus's house. It quite frightened me, but I went in. The moment I stepped inside, what should I see but a baby lying on the floor, panting and whimpering, and all covered with gold, and wrapped in clothes of such beautiful colours. Harpagus saw me, and directly ordered me to take the child in my arms and carry him off, and what was I to do with him, think you? Why, to lay him in the mountains, where the wild beasts are most plentiful. And he told me it was the king himself that ordered it to be done, and he threatened me with such dreadful things if I failed. So I took the child up in my arms, and carried him along. I thought it might be the son of one of the household slaves. I did wonder certainly to see the gold and the beautiful baby-clothes, and I could not think why there was such a weeping in Harpagus's house. Well, very soon, as I came along, I got at the truth. They sent a servant with me to show me the way out of the town, and to leave the baby in my hands; and he told me that the child's mother is the king's daughter Mandané, and his father Cambyzes, the son of Cyrus; and that the king orders him to be killed; and look, here the child is."

112. With this the herdsman uncovered the infant, and showed him to his wife, who, when she saw him, and observed how fine a child and how beautiful he was, burst into tears, and clinging to the knees of her husband, besought him on no account to expose the babe; to which he answered, that it was not possible for him to do otherwise, as Harpagus would be sure to send persons to see and report to him, and he was to suffer a most cruel death if he disobeyed. Failing thus in her first attempt to persuade her husband, the woman spoke a second time, saying, "If then there is no persuading thee, and a child must needs be seen exposed upon the mountains, at least do thus. The child of which I have just been delivered is still-born; take it and lay it on the hills, and let us bring up as our own the child of the daughter of Astyages. So shalt thou not be charged with unfaithfulness to thy lord, nor shall we have managed badly for ourselves. Our dead babe will have a royal funeral, and this living child will not be deprived of life."

113. It seemed to the herdsman that this advice was the best under the circumstances. He therefore followed it without loss of time. The child which he had intended to put to death he gave over to his wife, and his own dead child he put in the cradle wherein he had carried the other, clothing it first in all

the other's costly attire, and taking it in his arms he laid it in the wildest place of all the mountain-range. When the child had been three days exposed, leaving one of his helpers to watch the body, he started off for the city, and going straight to Harpagus's house, declared himself ready to show the corpse of the boy. Harpagus sent certain of his body-guard, on whom he had the firmest reliance, to view the body for him, and, satisfied with their seeing it, gave orders for the funeral. Thus was the herdsman's child buried, and the other child, who was afterwards known by the name of Cyrus, was taken by the herdsman's wife, and brought up under a different name.

114. When the boy was in his tenth year, an accident which I will now relate, caused it to be discovered who he was. He was at play one day in the village where the folds of the cattle were, along with the boys of his own age, in the street. The other boys who were playing with him chose the cowherd's son, as he was called, to be their king. He then proceeded to order them about—some he set to build him houses, others he made his guards, one of them was to be the king's eye, another had the office of carrying his messages, all had some task or other. Among the boys there was one, the son of Artembares, a Mede of distinction, who refused to do what Cyrus had set him. Cyrus told the other boys to take him into custody, and when his orders were obeyed, he chastised him most severely with the whip. The son of Artembares, as soon as he was let go, full of rage at treatment so little befitting his rank, hastened to the city and complained bitterly to his father of what had been done to him by Cyrus. He did not, of course, say "Cyrus," by which name the boy was not yet known, but called him the son of the king's cowherd. Artembares, in the heat of his passion, went to Astyages, accompanied by his son, and made complaint of the gross injury which had been done him. Pointing to the boy's shoulders, he exclaimed, "Thus, oh! king, has thy slave, the son of a cowherd, heaped insult upon us."

115. At this sight and these words Astyages, wishing to avenge the son of Artembares for his father's sake, sent for the cowherd and his boy. When they came together into his presence, fixing his eyes on Cyrus, Astyages said, "Hast thou then, the son of so mean a fellow as that, dared to behave thus rudely to the son of yonder noble, one of the first in my court?" "My lord," replied the boy, "I only treated him as he deserved. I was chosen king in play by the boys of our village, because

they thought me the best for it. He himself was one of the boys who chose me. All the others did according to my orders; but he refused, and made light of them, until at last he got his due reward. If for this I deserve to suffer punishment, here I am ready to submit to it."

116. While the boy was yet speaking Astyages was struck with a suspicion who he was. He thought he saw something in the character of his face like his own, and there was a nobleness about the answer he had made; besides which his age seemed to tally with the time when his grandchild was exposed. Astonished at all this, Astyages could not speak for a while. At last, recovering himself with difficulty, and wishing to be quit of Artembares, that he might examine the herdsman alone, he said to the former, "I promise thee, Artembares, so to settle this business that neither thou nor thy son shall have any cause to complain." Artembares retired from his presence, and the attendants, at the bidding of the king, led Cyrus into an inner apartment. Astyages then being left alone with the herdsman, inquired of him where he had got the boy, and who had given him to him; to which he made answer that the lad was his own child, begotten by himself, and that the mother who bore him was still alive, and lived with him in his house. Astyages remarked that he was very ill-advised to bring himself into such great trouble, and at the same time signed to his body-guard to lay hold of him. Then the herdsman, as they were dragging him to the rack, began at the beginning, and told the whole story exactly as it happened, without concealing anything, ending with entreaties and prayers to the king to grant him forgiveness.

117. Astyages, having got the truth of the matter from the herdsman, was very little further concerned about him, but with Harpagus he was exceedingly enraged. The guards were bidden to summon him into the presence, and on his appearance Astyages asked him, "By what death was it, Harpagus, that thou slewest the child of my daughter whom I gave into thy hands?" Harpagus, seeing the cowherd in the room, did not betake himself to lies, lest he should be confuted and proved false, but replied as follows:—"Sire, when thou gavest the child into my hands I instantly considered with myself how I could contrive to execute thy wishes, and yet, while guiltless of any unfaithfulness towards thee, avoid imbruing my hands in blood which was in truth thy daughter's and thine own. And this

was how I contrived it. I sent for this cowherd, and gave the child over to him, telling him that by the king's orders it was to be put to death. And in this I told no lie, for thou hadst so commanded. Moreover, when I gave him the child, I enjoined him to lay it somewhere in the wilds of the mountains, and to stay near and watch till it was dead; and I threatened him with all manner of punishment if he failed. Afterwards, when he had done according to all that I commanded him, and the child had died, I sent some of the most trustworthy of my eunuchs, who viewed the body for me, and then I had the child buried. This, sire, is the simple truth, and this is the death by which the child died."

118. Thus Harpagus related the whole story in a plain, straightforward way; upon which Astyages, letting no sign escape him of the anger that he felt, began by repeating to him all that he had just heard from the cowherd, and then concluded with saying, "So the boy is alive, and it is best as it is. For the child's fate was a great sorrow to me, and the reproaches of my daughter went to my heart. Truly fortune has played us a good turn in this. Go thou home then, and send thy son to be with the new comer, and to-night, as I mean to sacrifice thank-offerings for the child's safety to the gods to whom such honour is due, I look to have thee a guest at the banquet."

119. Harpagus, on hearing this, made obeisance, and went home rejoicing to find that his disobedience had turned out so fortunately, and that, instead of being punished, he was invited to a banquet given in honour of the happy occasion. The moment he reached home he called for his son, a youth of about thirteen, the only child of his parents, and bade him go to the palace, and do whatever Astyages should direct. Then, in the gladness of his heart, he went to his wife and told her all that had happened. Astyages, meanwhile, took the son of Harpagus, and slew him, after which he cut him in pieces, and roasted some portions before the fire, and boiled others; and when all were duly prepared, he kept them ready for use. The hour for the banquet came, and Harpagus appeared, and with him the other guests, and all sat down to the feast. Astyages and the rest of the guests had joints of meat served up to them; but on the table of Harpagus, nothing was placed except the flesh of his own son. This was all put before him, except the hands and feet and head, which were laid by themselves in a covered basket. When Harpagus seemed to have eaten his fill,

Astyages called out to him to know how he had enjoyed the repast. On his reply that he had enjoyed it excessively, they whose business it was brought him the basket, in which were the hands and feet and head of his son, and bade him open it, and take out what he pleased. Harpagus accordingly uncovered the basket, and saw within it the remains of his son. The sight, however, did not scare him, or rob him of his self-possession. Being asked by Astyages if he knew what beast's flesh it was that he had been eating, he answered that he knew very well, and that whatever the king did was agreeable. After this reply, he took with him such morsels of the flesh as were uneaten, and went home, intending, as I conceive, to collect the remains and bury them.

120. Such was the mode in which Astyages punished Harpagus: afterwards, proceeding to consider what he should do with Cyrus, his grandchild, he sent for the Magi, who formerly interpreted his dream in the way which alarmed him so much, and asked them how they had expounded it. They answered, without varying from what they had said before, that "the boy must needs be a king if he grew up, and did not die too soon." Then Astyages addressed them thus: "The boy has escaped, and lives; he has been brought up in the country, and the lads of the village where he lives have made him their king. All that kings commonly do he has done. He has had his guards, and his doorkeepers, and his messengers, and all the other usual officers. Tell me, then, to what, think you, does all this tend?" The Magi answered, "If the boy survives, and has ruled as a king without any craft or contrivance, in that case we bid thee cheer up, and feel no more alarm on his account. He will not reign a second time. For we have found even oracles sometimes fulfilled in an unimportant way; and dreams, still oftener, have wondrously mean accomplishments." "It is what I myself most incline to think," Astyages rejoined; "the boy having been already king, the dream is out, and I have nothing more to fear from him. Nevertheless, take good heed and counsel me the best you can for the safety of my house and your own interests." "Truly," said the Magi in reply, "it very much concerns our interests that thy kingdom be firmly established; for if it went to this boy it would pass into foreign hands, since he is a Persian: and then we Medes should lose our freedom, and be quite despised by the Persians, as being foreigners. But so long as thou, our fellow-countryman, art on the throne, all

manner of honours are ours, and we are even not without some share in the government. Much reason therefore have we to forecast well for thee and for thy sovereignty. If then we saw any cause for present fear, be sure we would not keep it back from thee. But truly we are persuaded that the dream has had its accomplishment in this harmless way; and so our own fears being at rest, we recommend thee to banish thine. As for the boy, our advice is, that thou send him away to Persia, to his father and mother."

121. Astyages heard their answer with pleasure, and calling Cyrus into his presence, said to him, "My child, I was led to do thee a wrong by a dream which has come to nothing: from that wrong thou wert saved by thy own good fortune. Go now with a light heart to Persia; I will provide thy escort. Go, and when thou gettest to thy journey's end, thou wilt behold thy father and thy mother, quite other people from Mitradates the cowherd and his wife."

122. With these words Astyages dismissed his grandchild. On his arrival at the house of Cambyzes, he was received by his parents, who, when they learnt who he was, embraced him heartily, having always been convinced that he died almost as soon as he was born. So they asked him by what means he had chanced to escape; and he told them how that till lately he had known nothing at all about the matter, but had been mistaken—oh! so widely!—and how that he had learnt his history by the way, as he came from Media. He had been quite sure that he was the son of the king's cowherd, but on the road the king's escort had told him all the truth; and then he spoke of the cowherd's wife who had brought him up, and filled his whole talk with her praises; in all that he had to tell them about himself, it was always Cyno—Cyno was everything. So it happened that his parents, catching the name at his mouth, and wishing to persuade the Persians that there was a special providence in his preservation, spread the report that Cyrus, when he was exposed, was suckled by a bitch. This was the sole origin of the rumour.

123. Afterwards, when Cyrus grew to manhood, and became known as the bravest and most popular of all his compeers, Harpagus, who was bent on revenging himself upon Astyages, began to pay him court by gifts and messages. His own rank was too humble for him to hope to obtain vengeance without some foreign help. When therefore he saw Cyrus, whose

wrongs were so similar to his own, growing up expressly (as it were) to be the avenger whom he needed, he set to work to procure his support and aid in the matter. He had already paved the way for his designs, by persuading, severally, the great Median nobles, whom the harsh rule of their monarch had offended, that the best plan would be to put Cyrus at their head, and dethrone Astyages. These preparations made, Harpagus being now ready for revolt, was anxious to make known his wishes to Cyrus, who still lived in Persia; but as the roads between Media and Persia were guarded, he had to contrive a means of sending word secretly, which he did in the following way. He took a hare, and cutting open its belly without hurting the fur, he slipped in a letter containing what he wanted to say, and then carefully sewing up the paunch, he gave the hare to one of his most faithful slaves, disguising him as a hunter with nets, and sent him off to Persia to take the game as a present to Cyrus, bidding him tell Cyrus, by word of mouth, to paunch the animal himself, and let no one be present at the time.

124. All was done as he wished, and Cyrus, on cutting the hare open, found the letter inside, and read as follows:—"Son of Cambyzes, the gods assuredly watch over thee, or never wouldst thou have passed through thy many wonderful adventures—now is the time when thou mayst avenge thyself upon Astyages, thy murderer. He willed thy death, remember; to the gods and to me thou owest that thou art still alive. I think thou art not ignorant of what he did to thee, nor of what I suffered at his hands because I committed thee to the cowherd, and did not put thee to death. Listen now to me, and obey my words, and all the empire of Astyages shall be thine. Raise the standard of revolt in Persia, and then march straight on Media. Whether Astyages appoint me to command his forces against thee, or whether he appoint any other of the princes of the Medes, all will go as thou couldst wish. They will be the first to fall away from him, and joining thy side, exert themselves to overturn his power. Be sure that on our part all is ready; wherefore do thou thy part, and that speedily."

125. Cyrus, on receiving the tidings contained in this letter, set himself to consider how he might best persuade the Persians to revolt. After much thought, he hit on the following as the most expedient course: he wrote what he thought proper upon a roll, and then calling an assembly of the Persians, he unfolded

the roll, and read out of it that Astyages appointed him their general. "And now," said he, "since it is so, I command you to go and bring each man his reaping-hook." With these words he dismissed the assembly.

Now the Persian nation is made up of many tribes.¹ Those which Cyrus assembled and persuaded to revolt from the Medes, were the principal ones on which all the others are dependent.² These are the Pasargadæ,³ the Maraphians, and the Maspians, of whom the Pasargadæ are the noblest. The Achæmenidæ,⁴ from which spring all the Perseid kings, is one of their clans. The rest of the Persian tribes are the following: the Panthialæans, the Derusiæans, the Germanians, who are engaged in husbandry; the Daans, the Mardians, the Dropicans, and the Sagartians, who are Nomads.⁵

126. When, in obedience to the orders which they had received, the Persians came with their reaping-hooks, Cyrus led them to a tract of ground, about eighteen or twenty forlongs each way, covered with thorns, and ordered them to clear it before the day was out. They accomplished their task; upon which he issued a second order to them, to take the bath the day following, and again come to him. Meanwhile he collected together all his father's flocks, both sheep and goats, and all his oxen, and slaughtered them, and made ready to give an entertainment to the entire Persian army. Wine, too, and bread of the choicest kinds were prepared for the occasion. When the morrow came, and the Persians appeared, he bade them recline

¹ According to Xenophon the number of the Persian tribes was *twelve* (Cyp. i. ii. § 5), according to Herodotus, ten.

² The distinction of superior and inferior tribes is common among nomadic and semi-nomadic nations.

³ Pasargadæ was not only the name of the principal Persian tribe, but also of the ancient capital of the country (Strab. xv. p. 1035). It seems tolerably certain that the modern *Murg-aub* is the site of the ancient Pasargadæ. Its position with respect to Persepolis, its strong situation among the mountains, its remains bearing the marks of high antiquity, and, above all, the name and tomb of Cyrus, which have been discovered among the ruins, mark it for the capital of that monarch beyond all reasonable doubt.

⁴ The Achæmenidæ were the royal family of Persia, the descendants of Achæmenes (Hakhâmanish), who was probably the leader under whom the Persians first settled in the country which has ever since borne their name. This Achæmenes is mentioned by Herodotus as the founder of the kingdom (iii. 75; vii. 11). Achæmenes continued to be used as a family name in after times. It was borne by one of the sons of Darius Hystaspes (infra, vii. 7).

⁵ Nomadic hordes must always be an important element in the population of Persia. Large portions of the country are only habitable at certain seasons of the year.

upon the grass, and enjoy themselves. After the feast was over, he requested them to tell him "which they liked best, to-day's work, or yesterday's?" They answered that "the contrast was indeed strong: yesterday brought them nothing but what was bad, to-day everything that was good." Cyrus instantly seized on their reply, and laid bare his purpose in these words: "Ye men of Persia, thus do matters stand with you. If you choose to hearken to my words, you may enjoy these and ten thousand similar delights, and never condescend to any slavish toil; but if you will not hearken, prepare yourselves for unnumbered toils as hard as yesterday's. Now therefore follow my bidding, and be free. For myself I feel that I am destined by Providence to undertake your liberation; and you, I am sure, are no whit inferior to the Medes in anything, least of all in bravery. Revolt, therefore, from Astyages, without a moment's delay."

127. The Persians, who had long been impatient of the Median dominion, now that they had found a leader, were delighted to shake off the yoke. Meanwhile Astyages, informed of the doings of Cyrus, sent a messenger to summon him to his presence. Cyrus replied, "Tell Astyages that I shall appear in his presence sooner than he will like." Astyages, when he received this message, instantly armed all his subjects, and, as if God had deprived him of his senses, appointed Harpagus to be their general, forgetting how greatly he had injured him. So when the two armies met and engaged, only a few of the Medes, who were not in the secret, fought; others deserted openly to the Persians; while the greater number counterfeited fear, and fled.

128. Astyages, on learning the shameful flight and dispersion of his army, broke out into threats against Cyrus, saying, "Cyrus shall nevertheless have no reason to rejoice;" and directly he seized the Magian interpreters, who had persuaded him to allow Cyrus to escape, and impaled them; after which, he armed all the Medes who had remained in the city, both young and old; and leading them against the Persians, fought a battle, in which he was utterly defeated, his army being destroyed, and he himself falling into the enemy's hands.

129. Harpagus then, seeing him a prisoner, came near, and exulted over him with many jibes and jeers. Among other cutting speeches which he made, he alluded to the supper where the flesh of his son was given him to eat, and asked Astyages to answer *him* now, how he enjoyed being a slave instead of a

king? Astyages looked in his face, and asked him in return, why he claimed as his own the achievements of Cyrus? "Because," said Harpagus, "it was my letter which made him revolt, and so I am entitled to all the credit of the enterprise." Then Astyages declared, that "in that case he was at once the silliest and the most unjust of men: the silliest, if when it was in his power to put the crown on his own head, as it must assuredly have been, if the revolt was entirely his doing, he had placed it on the head of another; the most unjust, if on account of that supper he had brought slavery on the Medes. For, supposing that he was obliged to invest another with the kingly power, and not retain it himself, yet justice required that a Mede, rather than a Persian, should receive the dignity. Now, however, the Medes, who had been no parties to the wrong of which he complained, were made slaves instead of lords, and slaves moreover of those who till recently had been their subjects."

130. Thus after a reign of thirty-five years, Astyages lost his crown, and the Medes, in consequence of his cruelty, were brought under the rule of the Persians. Their empire over the parts of Asia beyond the Halys had lasted one hundred and twenty-eight years, except during the time when the Scythians had the dominion.¹ Afterwards the Medes repented of their submission, and revolted from Darius, but were defeated in battle, and again reduced to subjection.² Now, however, in the time of Astyages, it was the Persians who under Cyrus revolted from the Medes, and became thenceforth the rulers of Asia. Cyrus kept Astyages at his court during the remainder of his life, without doing him any further injury. Such then were the circumstances of the birth and bringing up of Cyrus, and such were the steps by which he mounted the throne. It was at a later date that he was attacked by Cræsus, and overthrew him, as I have related in an earlier portion of this history. The overthrow of Cræsus made him master of the whole of Asia.

131. The customs which I know the Persians to observe are the following. They have no images of the gods, no temples nor altars, and consider the use of them a sign of folly. This comes, I think, from their not believing the gods to have the

¹ *i.e.* they ruled (128 - 28 =) 100 years. This would make their rule begin in the twenty-third year of Deïoces.

² In the great inscription of Darius at Behistun a long and elaborate account is given of a Median revolt which occurred in the third year of the reign of Darius, and was put down with difficulty.

same nature with men, as the Greeks imagine. Their wont, however, is to ascend the summits of the loftiest mountains, and there to offer sacrifice to Jupiter, which is the name they give to the whole circuit of the firmament. They likewise offer to the sun and moon, to the earth, to fire, to water, and to the winds. These are the only gods whose worship has come down to them from ancient times. At a later period they began the worship of Urania, which they borrowed ¹ from the Arabians and Assyrians. Mylitta is the name by which the Assyrians know this goddess, whom the Arabians call Alitta, and the Persians Mitra.²

132. To these gods the Persians offer sacrifice in the following manner: they raise no altar, light no fire, pour no libations; there is no sound of the flute, no putting on of chaplets, no consecrated barley-cake; but the man who wishes to sacrifice brings his victim to a spot of ground which is pure from pollution, and there calls upon the name of the god to whom he intends to offer. It is usual to have the turban encircled with a wreath, most commonly of myrtle. The sacrificer is not allowed to pray for blessings on himself alone, but he prays for the welfare of the king, and of the whole Persian people, among whom he is of necessity included. He cuts the victim in pieces, and having boiled the flesh, he lays it out upon the tenderest herbage that he can find, trefoil especially. When all is ready, one of the Magi comes forward and chants a hymn, which they say recounts the origin of the gods. It is not lawful to offer sacrifice unless there is a Magus present. After waiting a short

¹ The readiness of the Persians to adopt foreign customs, even in religion, is very remarkable. Perhaps the most striking instance is the adoption from the Assyrians of the well-known emblem consisting of a winged circle with or without a human figure rising from the circular space. This emblem is of Assyrian origin, appearing in the earliest sculptures of that country (Layard's *Nineveh*, vol. i. chap. v.). Its exact meaning is uncertain, but the conjecture is probable, that while in the human head we have the symbol of intelligence, the wings signify omnipresence, and the circle eternity. Thus the Persians were able, without the sacrifice of any principle, to admit it as a religious emblem, which we find them to have done, as early as the times of Darius, *universally* (see the sculptures at Persepolis, Nakhsh-i-Rustam, Behistun, etc.).

² This identification is altogether a mistake. The Persians, like their Vedic brethren, worshipped the sun under the name of Mithra. This was a portion of the religion which they brought with them from the Indus, and was not adopted from any foreign nation. The name of Mithra does not indeed occur in the Achæmenian inscriptions until the time of Artaxerxes Mnemon, but there is no reason to question the antiquity of his worship in Persia. Xenophon is right in making it a part of the religion of Cyrus (Cyrop. viii. iii. § 12, and vii. § 3).

time the sacrificer carries the flesh of the victim away with him, and makes whatever use of it he may please.¹

133. Of all the days in the year, the one which they celebrate most is their birthday. It is customary to have the board furnished on that day with an ampler supply than common. The richer Persians cause an ox, a horse, a camel, and an ass to be baked whole² and so served up to them: the poorer classes use instead the smaller kinds of cattle. They eat little solid food but abundance of dessert, which is set on table a few dishes at a time; this it is which makes them say that "the Greeks, when they eat, leave off hungry, having nothing worth mention served up to them after the meats; whereas, if they had more put before them, they would not stop eating." They are very fond of wine, and drink it in large quantities.³ To vomit or obey natural calls in the presence of another, is forbidden among them. Such are their customs in these matters.

It is also their general practice to deliberate upon affairs of weight when they are drunk; and then on the morrow, when they are sober, the decision to which they came the night before is put before them by the master of the house in which it was made; and if it is then approved of, they act on it; if not, they set it aside. Sometimes, however, they are sober at their first deliberation, but in this case they always reconsider the matter under the influence of wine.⁴

134. When they meet each other in the streets, you may know if the persons meeting are of equal rank by the following token; if they are, instead of speaking, they kiss each other on the lips. In the case where one is a little inferior to the other, the kiss is given on the cheek; where the difference of rank is great, the inferior prostrates himself upon the ground.⁵ Of

¹ At the secret meetings of the Ali Allahis of Persia, which in popular belief have attained an infamous notoriety, but which are in reality altogether innocent, are practised many ceremonies that bear a striking resemblance to the old Magian sacrifice.

² It is a common custom in the East at the present day, to roast sheep whole, even for an ordinary repast; and on fête days it is done in Dalmatia and in other parts of Europe.

³ At the present day, among the "bons vivants" of Persia, it is usual to sit for hours before dinner drinking wine, and eating dried fruits, such as filberts, almonds, pistachio-nuts, melon seeds, etc. A party, indeed, often sits down at seven o'clock, and the dinner is not brought in till eleven.

⁴ Tacitus asserts that the Germans were in the habit of deliberating on peace and war under the influence of wine, reserving their determination for the morrow.

⁵ The Persians are still notorious for their rigid attention to ceremonial and etiquette.

nations, they honour most their nearest neighbours, whom they esteem next to themselves; those who live beyond these they honour in the second degree; and so with the remainder, the further they are removed, the less the esteem in which they hold them. The reason is, that they look upon themselves as very greatly superior in all respects to the rest of mankind, regarding others as approaching to excellence in proportion as they dwell nearer to them; whence it comes to pass that those who are the farthest off must be the most degraded of mankind.¹ Under the dominion of the Medes, the several nations of the empire exercised authority over each other in this order. The Medes were lords over all, and governed the nations upon their borders, who in their turn governed the States beyond, who likewise bore rule over the nations which adjoined on them.² And this is the order which the Persians also follow in their distribution of honour; for that people, like the Medes, has a progressive scale of administration and government.

135. There is no nation which so readily adopts foreign customs as the Persians. Thus, they have taken the dress of the Medes,³ considering it superior to their own; and in war they wear the Egyptian breastplate. As soon as they hear of any luxury, they instantly make it their own: and hence, among other novelties, they have learnt unnatural lust from the Greeks. Each of them has several wives, and a still larger number of concubines.

136. Next to prowess in arms, it is regarded as the greatest proof of manly excellence, to be the father of many sons.

¹ In an early stage of geographical knowledge each nation regards itself as occupying the centre of the earth. Herodotus tacitly assumes that Greece is the centre by his theory of *ἐσχατῆαι* or "extremities" (iii. 115). Such was the view commonly entertained among the Greeks, and Delphi, as the centre of Greece, was called "the navel of the world."

² It is quite inconceivable that there should have been any such system of government either in Media or Persia, as Herodotus here indicates. With respect to Persia, we know that the most distant satrapies were held as directly of the crown as the nearest. The utmost that can be said with truth is, that in the Persian and Median, as in the Roman empire, there were *three* grades; first, the ruling nation; secondly, the conquered provinces; thirdly, the nations on the frontier, governed by their own laws and princes, but owning the supremacy of the imperial power, and reckoned among its tributaries. This was the position in which the Ethiopians, Colchians, and Arabians, stood to Persia (Herod. iii. 97).

³ It appears from ch. 71 that the old national dress of the Persians was a close-fitting tunic and trousers of leather. The Median costume, according to Xenophon (Cyrop. viii. i. § 40) was of a nature to conceal the form, and give it an appearance of grandeur and elegance. It would seem therefore to have been a flowing robe.

Every year the king sends rich gifts to the man who can show the largest number: for they hold that number is strength. Their sons are carefully instructed from their fifth to their twentieth year, in three things alone,—to ride, to draw the bow, and to speak the truth.¹ Until their fifth year they are not allowed to come into the sight of their father, but pass their lives with the women. This is done that, if the child die young, the father may not be afflicted by its loss.

137. To my mind it is a wise rule, as also is the following—that the king shall not put any one to death for a single fault, and that none of the Persians shall visit a single fault in a slave with any extreme penalty; but in every case the services of the offender shall be set against his misdoings; and, if the latter be found to outweigh the former, the aggrieved party shall then proceed to punishment.²

138. The Persians maintain that never yet did any one kill his own father or mother; but in all such cases they are quite sure that, if matters were sifted to the bottom, it would be found that the child was either a changeling or else the fruit of adultery; for it is not likely they say that the real father should perish by the hands of his child.

139. They hold it unlawful to talk of anything which it is unlawful to do. The most disgraceful thing in the world, they think, is to tell a lie; the next worst, to owe a debt: because, among other reasons, the debtor is obliged to tell lies. If a Persian has the leprosy³ he is not allowed to enter into a city, or to have any dealings with the other Persians; he must, they say, have sinned against the sun. Foreigners attacked by this disorder, are forced to leave the country: even white pigeons are often driven away, as guilty of the same offence. They never defile a river with the secretions of their bodies, nor even wash their hands in one; nor will they allow others to do so, as they have a great reverence for rivers. There is another peculiarity, which the Persians themselves have never noticed, but which has not escaped my observation. Their names,

¹ The Persian regard for truth has been questioned by Larcher on the strength of the speech of Darius in Book iii. (chap. 72). This speech, however, is entirely unhistoric. The special estimation in which truth was held among the Persians is evidenced in a remarkable manner by the inscriptions of Darius, where *lying* is taken as the representative of all evil.

² Vide *infra*, vii. 194.

³ With the Persian isolation of the leper, compare the Jewish practice (Lev. xiii. 46. 2 Kings vii. 3; xv. 5. Luke xvii. 12).

which are expressive of some bodily or mental excellence, all end with the same letter—the letter which is called San by the Dorians, and Sigma by the Ionians. Any one who examines will find that the Persian names, one and all without exception, end with this letter.¹

140. Thus much I can declare of the Persians with entire certainty, from my own actual knowledge. There is another custom which is spoken of with reserve, and not openly, concerning their dead. It is said that the body of a male Persian is never buried, until it has been torn either by a dog or a bird of prey.² That the Magi have this custom is beyond a doubt, for they practise it without any concealment. The dead bodies are covered with wax, and then buried in the ground.

The Magi are a very peculiar race, different entirely from the Egyptian priests, and indeed from all other men whatsoever. The Egyptian priests make it a point of religion not to kill any live animals except those which they offer in sacrifice. The Magi, on the contrary, kill animals of all kinds with their own hands, excepting dogs³ and men. They even seem to take a delight in the employment, and kill, as readily as they do other animals, ants and snakes, and such like flying or creeping things. However, since this has always been their custom, let them keep to it. I return to my former narrative.

141. Immediately after the conquest of Lydia by the Persians, the Ionian and Æolian Greeks sent ambassadors to Cyrus at Sardis, and prayed to become his lieges on the footing which they had occupied under Croesus. Cyrus listened attentively to their proposals, and answered them by a fable. "There was a certain piper," he said, "who was walking one day by the seaside, when he espied some fish; so he began to pipe to them, imagining they would come out to him upon the land. But as he found at last that his hope was vain, he took a net, and enclosing a great draught of fishes, drew them ashore. The fish

¹ Here Herodotus was again mistaken. The Persian names of men which terminate with a consonant end indeed invariably with the letter *s*, or rather *sh*, as *Kurúsh* (Cyrus), *Dáryavush* (Darius). But a large number of Persian names of men were pronounced with a vowel termination, not expressed in writing, and in these the last consonant might be almost any letter.

² Agathias and Strabo also mention this strange custom, which still prevails among the Parsees wherever they are found, whether in Persia or in India.

³ The dog is represented in the Zendavesta as the special animal of Ormazd, and is still regarded with peculiar reverence by the Parsees.

then began to leap and dance; but the piper said, 'Cease your dancing now, as you did not choose to come and dance when I piped to you.' " Cyrus gave this answer to the Ionians and Æolians, because, when he urged them by his messengers to revolt from Croesus, they refused; but now, when his work was done, they came to offer their allegiance. It was in anger, therefore, that he made them this reply. The Ionians, on hearing it, set to work to fortify their towns, and held meetings at the Panionium, which were attended by all excepting the Milesians, with whom Cyrus had concluded a separate treaty, by which he allowed them the terms they had formerly obtained from Croesus. The other Ionians resolved, with one accord, to send ambassadors to Sparta to implore assistance.

142. Now the Ionians of Asia, who meet at the Panionium, have built their cities in a region where the air and climate are the most beautiful in the whole world: for no other region is equally blessed with Ionia, neither above it nor below it, nor east nor west of it. For in other countries either the climate is over cold and damp, or else the heat and drought are sorely oppressive. The Ionians do not all speak the same language, but use in different places four different dialects. Towards the south their first city is Miletus, next to which lie Myus and Priêné;¹ all these three are in Caria and have the same dialect. Their cities in Lydia are the following: Ephesus, Colophon, Lebedus, Teos, Clazomenæ, and Phocæa.² The inhabitants of these towns have none of the peculiarities of speech which belong to the three first-named cities, but use a dialect of their own. There remain three other Ionian towns, two situate in isles, namely, Samos and Chios; and one upon the mainland, which is Erythræ. Of these Chios and Erythræ have the same dialect, while Samos possesses a language peculiar to itself. Such are the four varieties of which I spoke.

143. Of the Ionians at this period, one people, the Milesians, were in no danger of attack, as Cyrus had received them into alliance. The islanders also had as yet nothing to fear, since Phœnicia was still independent of Persia, and the Persians themselves were not a seafaring people. The Milesians had

¹ Miletus, Myus, and Priêné all lay near the mouth of the Mæander (the modern *Mendere*). At their original colonisation they were all maritime cities.

² These cities are enumerated in the order in which they stood, from south to north. Erythræ lay on the coast opposite Chios, between Teos and Clazomenæ.

separated from the common cause solely on account of the extreme weakness of the Ionians: for, feeble as the power of the entire Hellenic race was at that time, of all its tribes the Ionic was by far the feeblest and least esteemed, not possessing a single State of any mark excepting Athens. The Athenians and most of the other Ionic States over the world, went so far in their dislike of the name as actually to lay it aside; and even at the present day the greater number of them seem to me to be ashamed of it. But the twelve cities in Asia have always gloried in the appellation; they gave the temple which they built for themselves the name of the Panionium, and decreed that it should not be open to any of the other Ionic States; no State, however, except Smyrna, has craved admission to it.

144. In the same way the Dorians of the region which is now called the Pentapolis, but which was formerly known as the Doric Hexapolis, exclude all their Dorian neighbours from their temple, the Triopium:¹ nay, they have even gone so far as to shut out from it certain of their own body who were guilty of an offence against the customs of the place. In the games which were anciently celebrated in honour of the Triopian Apollo, the prizes given to the victors were tripods of brass; and the rule was that these tripods should not be carried away from the temple, but should then and there be dedicated to the god. Now a man of Halicarnassus, whose name was Agasicles, being declared victor in the games, in open contempt of the law, took the tripod home to his own house and there hung it against the wall. As a punishment for this fault, the five other cities, Lindus, Ialyssus, Cameirus, Cos, and Cnidus, deprived the sixth city, Halicarnassus, of the right of entering the temple.²

145. The Ionians founded twelve cities in Asia, and refused to enlarge the number, on account (as I imagine) of their having been divided into twelve States when they lived in the Peloponnese; just as the Achæans, who drove them out, are at the present day. The first city of the Achæans after Sicyon, is

¹ The Triopium was built on a promontory of the same name within the territory of the Cnicians.

² Lindus, Ialyssus, and Cameirus were in Rhodes; Cos was on the island of the same name, at the mouth of the Ceramic Gulf. Cnidus and Halicarnassus were on the mainland, the former near to the Triopium, the latter on the north shore of the Ceramic Gulf, on the site now occupied by *Boodroom*. These six cities formed an Amphictyony, which held its meetings at the temple of Apollo, called the Triopium, near Cnidus, the most central of the cities.

Pellêné, next to which are Ægeira, Ægæ upon the Crathis, a stream which is never dry, and from which the Italian Crathis¹ received its name,—Bura, Helicé—where the Ionians took refuge on their defeat by the Achæan invaders,—Ægium, Rhypes, Patreis, Phareis, Olenus on the Peirus, which is a large river,—Dymé and Tritæeis, all sea-port towns except the last two, which lie up the country.

146. These are the twelve divisions of what is now Achæa, and was formerly Ionia; and it was owing to their coming from a country so divided that the Ionians, on reaching Asia, founded their twelve States: for it is the height of folly to maintain that these Ionians are more Ionian than the rest, or in any respect better born, since the truth is that no small portion of them were Abantians from Eubœa, who are not even Ionians in name; and, besides, there were mixed up with the emigration, Minyæ from Orchomenus, Cadmeians, Dryopians, Phocians from the several cities of Phocis, Molossians, Arcadian Pelasgi, Dorians from Epidaurus, and many other distinct tribes. Even those who came from the Prytanêum of Athens,² and reckon themselves the purest Ionians of all, brought no wives with them to the new country, but married Carian girls, whose fathers they had slain. Hence these women made a law, which they bound themselves by an oath to observe, and which they handed down to their daughters after them, "That none should ever sit at meat with her husband, or call him by his name;" because the invaders slew their fathers, their husbands, and their sons, and then forced them to become their wives. It was at Miletus that these events took place.

147. The kings, too, whom they set over them, were either Lycians, of the blood of Glaucus,³ son of Hippolochus, or Pylian Caucons⁴ of the blood of Codrus, son of Melanthus; or else

¹ The Italian Crathis ran close by our author's adopted city, Thurium (*infra*, v. 45).

² This expression alludes to the solemnities which accompanied the sending out of a colony. In the Prytanêum, or Government-house, of each state was preserved the sacred fire, which was never allowed to go out, whereon the life of the State was supposed to depend. When a colony took its departure, the leaders went in solemn procession to the Prytanêum of the mother city, and took fresh fire from the sacred hearth, which was conveyed to the Prytanêum of the new settlement.

³ See *Hom. Il. ii.* 876.

⁴ The Caucons are reckoned by Strabo among the earliest inhabitants of Greece, and associated with the Pelasgi, Leleges, and Dryopes (*vii.* p. 465). Like their kindred tribes, they were very widely spread. Their chief settlements, however, appear to have been on the north coast of Asia Minor.

from both those families. But since these Ionians set more store by the name than any of the others, let them pass for the pure-bred Ionians; though truly all are Ionians who have their origin from Athens, and keep the Apaturia.¹ This is a festival which all the Ionians celebrate, except the Ephesians and the Colophonians, whom a certain act of bloodshed excludes from it.

148. The Panionium² is a place in Mycalé, facing the north, which was chosen by the common voice of the Ionians and made sacred to Heliconian Neptune.³ Mycalé itself is a promontory of the mainland, stretching out westward towards Samos, in which the Ionians assemble from all their States to keep the feast of the Panionia.⁴ The names of festivals, not only among the Ionians but among all the Greeks, end, like the Persian proper names, in one and the same letter.

149. The above-mentioned, then, are the twelve towns of the Ionians. The Æolic cities are the following:—Cymé, called also Phricônis, Larissa, Neonteichus, Temnus, Cilla, Notium, Ægiroëssa, Pitané, Ægææ, Myrina, and Gryneia. These are the eleven ancient cities of the Æolians. Originally, indeed, they had twelve cities upon the mainland, like the Ionians, but the Ionians deprived them of Smyrna, one of the number. The soil of Æolis is better than that of Ionia, but the climate is less agreeable.

150. The following is the way in which the loss of Smyrna happened. Certain men of Colophon had been engaged in a sedition there, and being the weaker party, were driven by the others into banishment. The Smyrnæans received the fugitives, who, after a time, watching their opportunity, while the inhabi-

¹ The Apaturia was the solemn annual meeting of the phratries, for the purpose of registering the children of the preceding year whose birth entitled them to citizenship. It took place in the month Pyanepsion (November), and lasted three days.

² Under the name of Panionium are included both a tract of ground and a temple. It is the former of which Herodotus here speaks particularly, as the place in which the great Pan-Ionic festival was held. The spot was on the north side of the promontory of Mycalé. The Panionium was in the territory of Priêné, and consequently under the guardianship of that state.

³ Heliconian Neptune was so called from Helicé, which is mentioned above among the ancient Ionian cities in the Peloponnese (ch. 145). This had been the central point of the old confederacy, and the temple there had been in old times their place of meeting.

⁴ It is remarkable that Thucydides, writing so shortly after Herodotus, should speak of the Pan-Ionic festival at Mycalé as no longer of any importance, and regard it as practically superseded by the festival of the Ephesia, held near Ephesus (iii. 104). Still the old feast continued, and was celebrated as late as the time of Augustus.

tants were celebrating a feast to Bacchus outside the walls, shut to the gates, and so got possession of the town. The Æolians of the other States came to their aid, and terms were agreed on between the parties, the Ionians consenting to give up all the moveables, and the Æolians making a surrender of the place. The expelled Smyrnæans were distributed among the other States of the Æolians, and were everywhere admitted to citizenship.

151. These, then, were all the Æolic cities upon the mainland, with the exception of those about Mount Ida, which made no part of this confederacy.¹ As for the islands, Lesbos contains five cities.² Arisba, the sixth, was taken by the Methymnæans, their kinsmen, and the inhabitants reduced to slavery. Tenedos contains one city, and there is another which is built on what are called the Hundred Isles.³ The Æolians of Lesbos and Tenedos, like the Ionian islanders, had at this time nothing to fear. The other Æolians decided in their common assembly to follow the Ionians, whatever course they should pursue.

152. When the deputies of the Ionians and Æolians, who had journeyed with all speed to Sparta, reached the city, they chose one of their number, Pythermus, a Phocæan, to be their spokesman. In order to draw together as large an audience as possible, he clothed himself in a purple garment, and so attired stood forth to speak. In a long discourse he besought the Spartans to come to the assistance of his countrymen, but they were not to be persuaded, and voted against sending any succour. The deputies accordingly went their way, while the Lacedæmonians, notwithstanding the refusal which they had given to the prayer of the deputation, despatched a penteconter⁴ to the Asiatic coast with certain Spartans on board, for the purpose, as I think, of watching Cyrus and Ionia. These men, on their arrival at Phocæa, sent to Sardis Lacrines, the most distinguished of their number, to prohibit Cyrus, in the name of the Lacedæmonians, from offering molestation to any city of Greece, since they would not allow it.

¹ The district here indicated, and commonly called the Troad, extended from Adramyttium on the south to Priapus on the north.

² The five Lesbian cities were: Mytilêné, Methymna, Antissa, Eresus, and Pyrrha.

³ These islands lay off the promontory which separated the bay of Atarneus from that of Adramyttium, opposite to the northern part of the island of Lesbos.

⁴ Penteconters were ships with fifty rowers, twenty-five on a side, who sat on a level, as is customary in rowboats at the present day.

153. Cyrus is said, on hearing the speech of the herald, to have asked some Greeks who were standing by, "Who these Lacedæmonians were, and what was their number, that they dared to send him such a notice?"¹ When he had received their reply, he turned to the Spartan herald and said, "I have never yet been afraid of any men, who have a set place in the middle of their city, where they come together to cheat each other and forswear themselves. If I live, the Spartans shall have troubles enough of their own to talk of, without concerning themselves about the Ionians." Cyrus intended these words as a reproach against all the Greeks, because of their having market-places where they buy and sell, which is a custom unknown to the Persians, who never make purchases in open marts, and indeed have not in their whole country a single market-place.²

After this interview Cyrus quitted Sardis, leaving the city under the charge of Tabalus, a Persian, but appointing Pactyas, a native, to collect the treasure belonging to Cræsus and the other Lydians, and bring it after him. Cyrus himself proceeded towards Agbatana, carrying Cræsus along with him, not regarding the Ionians as important enough to be his immediate object. Larger designs were in his mind. He wished to war in person against Babylon, the Bactrians, the Sacæ,³ and Egypt; he therefore determined to assign to one of his generals the task of conquering the Ionians.

154. No sooner, however, was Cyrus gone from Sardis than Pactyas induced his countrymen to rise in open revolt against him and his deputy Tabalus. With the vast treasures at his disposal he then went down to the sea, and employed them in hiring mercenary troops, while at the same time he engaged the people of the coast to enrol themselves in his army. He then marched upon Sardis, where he besieged Tabalus, who shut himself up in the citadel.

155. When Cyrus, on his way to Agbatana, received these tidings, he turned to Cræsus and said, "Where will all this end,

¹ Compare v. 73 and 105.

² Markets in the strict sense of the word are still unknown in the East, where the bazaars, which are collections of shops, take their place. The Persians of the nobler class would neither buy nor sell at all, since they would be supplied by their dependents and through presents with all that they required for the common purposes of life. Those of lower rank would buy at the shops, which were not allowed in the Forum, or public place of meeting.

³ Bactria may be regarded as fairly represented by the modern Balkh. The Sacæ (Scyths) are more difficult to locate; it only appears that their country bordered upon and lay beyond Bactria.

Crœsus, thinkest thou? It seemeth that these Lydians will not cease to cause trouble both to themselves and others. I doubt me if it were not best to sell them all for slaves. Methinks what I have now done is as if a man were to 'kill the father and then spare the child.' Thou, who wert something more than a father to thy people, I have seized and carried off, and to that people I have entrusted their city. Can I then feel surprise at their rebellion?" Thus did Cyrus open to Crœsus his thoughts; whereat the latter, full of alarm lest Cyrus should lay Sardis in ruins, replied as follows: "Oh! my king, thy words are reasonable; but do not, I beseech thee, give full vent to thy anger, nor doom to destruction an ancient city, guiltless alike of the past and of the present trouble. I caused the one, and in my own person now pay the forfeit. Pactyas has caused the other, he to whom thou gavest Sardis in charge; let him bear the punishment. Grant, then, forgiveness to the Lydians, and to make sure of their never rebelling against thee, or alarming thee more, send and forbid them to keep any weapons of war, command them to wear tunics under their cloaks, and to put buskins upon their legs, and make them bring up their sons to cithern-playing, harping, and shop-keeping. So wilt thou soon see them become women instead of men, and there will be no more fear of their revolting from thee."

156. Crœsus thought the Lydians would even so be better off than if they were sold for slaves, and therefore gave the above advice to Cyrus, knowing that, unless he brought forward some notable suggestion, he would not be able to persuade him to alter his mind. He was likewise afraid lest, after escaping the danger which now pressed, the Lydians at some future time might revolt from the Persians and so bring themselves to ruin. The advice pleased Cyrus, who consented to forego his anger and do as Crœsus had said. Thereupon he summoned to his presence a certain Mede, Mazares by name, and charged him to issue orders to the Lydians in accordance with the terms of Crœsus' discourse. Further, he commanded him to sell for slaves all who had joined the Lydians in their attack upon Sardis, and above aught else to be sure that he brought Pactyas with him alive on his return. Having given these orders Cyrus continued his journey towards the Persian territory.

157. Pactyas, when news came of the near approach of the army sent against him, fled in terror to Cymé. Mazares, therefore, the Median general, who had marched on Sardis with

a detachment of the army of Cyrus, finding on his arrival that Pactyas and his troops were gone, immediately entered the town. And first of all he forced the Lydians to obey the orders of his master, and change (as they did from that time) their entire manner of living. Next, he despatched messengers to Cymé, and required to have Pactyas delivered up to him. On this the Cymæans resolved to send to Branchidæ and ask the advice of the god. Branchidæ¹ is situated in the territory of Miletus, above the port of Panormus. There was an oracle there, established in very ancient times, which both the Ionians and Æolians were wont often to consult.

158. Hither therefore the Cymæans sent their deputies to make inquiry at the shrine, "What the gods would like them to do with the Lydian, Pactyas?" The oracle told them, in reply, to give him up to the Persians. With this answer the messengers returned, and the people of Cymé were ready to surrender him accordingly; but as they were preparing to do so, Aristodicus, son of Heraclides, a citizen of distinction, hindered them. He declared that he distrusted the response, and believed that the messengers had reported it falsely; until at last another embassy, of which Aristodicus himself made part, was despatched, to repeat the former inquiry concerning Pactyas.

159. On their arrival at the shrine of the god, Aristodicus, speaking on behalf of the whole body, thus addressed the oracle: "Oh! king, Pactyas the Lydian, threatened by the Persians with a violent death, has come to us for sanctuary, and lo, they ask him at our hands, calling upon our nation to deliver him up. Now, though we greatly dread the Persian power, yet have we not been bold to give up our suppliant, till we have certain knowledge of thy mind, what thou wouldst have us to do." The oracle thus questioned gave the same answer as before, bidding them surrender Pactyas to the Persians; whereupon Aristodicus, who had come prepared for such an answer, proceeded to make the circuit of the temple, and to take all the nests of young sparrows and other birds that he could find about the building. As he was thus employed, a voice, it is said, came forth from the inner sanctuary, addressing Aristodicus

¹ The temple of Apollo at Branchidæ and the port Panormus still remain. The former is twelve miles from Miletus, nearly due south. It lies near the shore, about two miles inland from Cape *Monodendri*. It is a magnificent ruin of Ionic architecture. [See Frazer's *Pausanias*, vol. iv. 126 (E.H.B.).]

in these words: "Most impious of men, what is this thou hast the face to do? Dost thou tear my suppliants from my temple?" Aristodicus, at no less for a reply, rejoined, "Oh, king, art thou so ready to protect thy suppliants, and dost thou command the Cymæans to give up a suppliant?" "Yes," returned the god, "I do command it, that so for the impiety you may the sooner perish, and not come here again to consult my oracle about the surrender of suppliants."

160. On the receipt of this answer the Cymæans, unwilling to bring the threatened destruction on themselves by giving up the man, and afraid of having to endure a siege if they continued to harbour him, sent Pactyas away to Mytilêné. On this Mazares despatched envoys to the Mytilenæans to demand the fugitive of them, and they were preparing to give him up for a reward (I cannot say with certainty how large, as the bargain was not completed), when the Cymæans, hearing what the Mytilenæans were about, sent a vessel to Lesbos, and conveyed away Pactyas to Chios. From hence it was that he was surrendered. The Chians dragged him from the temple of Minerva Poliuchus¹ and gave him up to the Persians, on condition of receiving the district of Atarneus, a tract of Mysia opposite to Lesbos,² as the price of the surrender. Thus did Pactyas fall into the hands of his pursuers, who kept a strict watch upon him, that they might be able to produce him before Cyrus. For a long time afterwards none of the Chians would use the barley of Atarneus to place on the heads of victims, or make sacrificial cakes of the corn grown there, but the whole produce of the land was excluded from all their temples.

161. Meanwhile Mazares, after he had recovered Pactyas from the Chians, made war upon those who had taken part in the attack on Tabalus, and in the first place took Priêné and sold the inhabitants for slaves, after which he overran the whole plain of the Mæander and the district of Magnesia,³ both of which he gave up for pillage to the soldiery. He then suddenly sickened and died.

162. Upon his death Harpagus was sent down to the coast to succeed to his command. He also was of the race of the Medes, being the man whom the Median king, Astyages, feasted at the

¹ That is, "Minerva, Guardian of the citadel."

² Atarneus lay to the north of the Æolis of Herodotus, almost exactly opposite to Mytilêné.

³ Not Magnesia under Sipylus, but Magnesia on the Mæander, one of the few ancient Greek settlements situated far inland.

unholy banquet, and who lent his aid to place Cyrus upon the throne. Appointed by Cyrus to conduct the war in these parts, he entered Ionia, and took the cities by means of mounds. Forcing the enemy to shut themselves up within their defences, he heaped mounds of earth against their walls,¹ and thus carried the towns. Phocæa was the city against which he directed his first attack.

163. Now the Phocæans were the first of the Greeks who performed long voyages, and it was they who made the Greeks acquainted with the Adriatic and with Tyrrhenia, with Iberia, and the city of Tartessus.² The vessel which they used in their voyages was not the round-built merchant-ship, but the long penteconter. On their arrival at Tartessus, the king of the country, whose name was Arganthônus, took a liking to them. This monarch reigned over the Tartessians for eighty years, and lived to be a hundred and twenty years old. He regarded the Phocæans with so much favour as, at first, to beg them to quit Ionia and settle in whatever part of his country they liked. Afterwards, finding that he could not prevail upon them to agree to this, and hearing that the Mede was growing great in their neighbourhood, he gave them money to build a wall about their town, and certainly he must have given it with a bountiful hand, for the town is many furlongs in circuit, and the wall is built entirely of great blocks of stone skilfully fitted together. The wall, then, was built by his aid.

164. Harpagus, having advanced against the Phocæans with his army, laid siege to their city, first, however, offering them terms. "It would content him," he said, "if the Phocæans would agree to throw down one of their battlements, and dedicate one dwelling-house to the king." The Phocæans, sorely vexed at the thought of becoming slaves, asked a single day to deliberate on the answer they should return, and besought Harpagus during that day to draw off his forces from the walls. Harpagus replied, "that he understood well enough what they were about to do, but nevertheless he would grant their request." Accordingly the troops were withdrawn, and

¹ This plan seems not to have been known to the Lydians. The Persians had learnt it, in all probability, from the Assyrians, by whom it had long been practised. (2 Kings xix. 32. Isaiah xxxvii. 33.)

² The Iberia of Herodotus is the Spanish Peninsula. Tartessus was a colony founded there very early by the Phœnicians. It was situated beyond the straits at the mouth of the Bætis (*Guadalquivir*), near the site of the modern Cadiz. Tarsus, Tartessus, Tarshish, are variants of the same word. [See Ulick Burke's *History of Spain*, vol. i. ch. i. (E.H.B.).]

the Phoceans forthwith took advantage of their absence to launch their penteconters, and put on board their wives and children, their household goods, and even the images of their gods, with all the votive offerings from the fanes, except the paintings and the works in stone or brass, which were left behind. With the rest they embarked, and putting to sea, set sail for Chios. The Persians, on their return, took possession of an empty town.

165. Arrived at Chios, the Phocæans made offers for the purchase of the islands called the Cænussæ,¹ but the Chians refused to part with them, fearing lest the Phocæans should establish a factory there, and exclude their merchants from the commerce of those seas. On their refusal, the Phocæans, as Arganthônus was now dead, made up their minds to sail to Cynus (Corsica), where, twenty years before, following the direction of an oracle,² they had founded a city, which was called Alalia. Before they set out, however, on this voyage, they sailed once more to Phocæa, and surprising the Persian troops appointed by Harpagus to garrison the town, put them all to the sword. After this they laid the heaviest curses on the man who should draw back and forsake the armament; and having dropped a heavy mass of iron into the sea, swore never to return to Phocæa till that mass reappeared upon the surface. Nevertheless, as they were preparing to depart for Cynus, more than half of their number were seized with such sadness and so great a longing to see once more their city and their ancient homes, that they broke the oath by which they had bound themselves and sailed back to Phocæa.

166. The rest of the Phocæans, who kept their oath, proceeded without stopping upon their voyage, and when they came to Cynus established themselves along with the earlier settlers at Alalia and built temples in the place. For five years they annoyed their neighbours by plundering and pillaging on all sides, until at length the Carthaginians and Tyrrhenians³

¹ The Cænussæ lay between Chios and the mainland, opposite the northern extremity of that island (Lat. 38° 33').

² A most important influence was exercised by the Greek oracles, especially that of Delphi, over the course of Hellenic colonisation. Further instances occur, iv. 155, 157, 159; v. 42.

³ The naval power of the Tyrrhenians was about this time at its height. Populonia and Cæré (or Agylla) were the most important of their maritime towns. Like the Greeks at a somewhat earlier period (Thucyd. i. 5), the Tyrrhenians at this time and for some centuries afterwards were pirates.

leagued against them, and sent each a fleet of sixty ships to attack the town. The Phocæans, on their part, manned all their vessels, sixty in number, and met their enemy on the Sardinian sea. In the engagement which followed the Phocæans were victorious, but their success was only a sort of Cadmeian victory.¹ They lost forty ships in the battle, and the twenty which remained came out of the engagement with beaks so bent and blunted as to be no longer serviceable. The Phocæans therefore sailed back again to Alalia, and taking their wives and children on board, with such portion of their goods and chattels as the vessels could bear, bade adieu to Cynus and sailed to Rhegium.

167. The Carthaginians and Tyrrhenians, who had got into their hands many more than the Phocæans from among the crews of the forty vessels that were destroyed, landed their captives upon the coast after the fight, and stoned them all to death. Afterwards, when sheep, or oxen, or even men of the district of Agylla passed by the spot where the murdered Phocæans lay, their bodies became distorted, or they were seized with palsy, or they lost the use of some of their limbs. On this the people of Agylla sent to Delphi to ask the oracle how they might expiate their sin. The answer of the Pythoness required them to institute the custom, which they still observe, of honouring the dead Phocæans with magnificent funeral rites, and solemn games, both gymnastic and equestrian. Such, then, was the fate that befell the Phocæan prisoners. The other Phocæans, who had fled to Rhegium, became after a while the founders of the city called Vela,² in the district of Ænotria. This city they colonised, upon the showing of a man of Posidonia,³ who suggested that the oracle had not meant to bid them set up a town in Cynus the island, but set up the worship of Cynus the hero.⁴

168. Thus fared it with the men of the city of Phocæa in Ionia. They of Teos⁵ did and suffered almost the same; for

¹ A Cadmeian victory was one from which the victor received more hurt than profit.

² This is the town more commonly called Velia or Elea, where soon afterwards the great Eleatic school of philosophy arose.

³ This is the place now known as *Pæstum*, so famous for its beautiful ruins.

⁴ Cynus was a son of Hercules.

⁵ Teos was situated on the south side of the isthmus which joined the peninsula of Erythræ to the mainland, very nearly opposite Clazomenæ (Strab. xiv. p. 922). It was the birthplace of Anacreon, the lyric poet.

they too, when Harpagus had raised his mound to the height of their defences, took ship, one and all, and sailing across the sea to Thrace, founded there the city of Abdêra.¹ The site was one which Timêsius of Clazomenæ had previously tried to colonise, but without any lasting success, for he was expelled by the Thracians. Still the Teians of Abdêra worship him to this day as a hero.

169. Of all the Ionians these two states alone, rather than submit to slavery, forsook their fatherland. The others (I except Miletus) resisted Harpagus no less bravely than those who fled their country, and performed many feats of arms, each fighting in their own defence, but one after another they suffered defeat; the cities were taken, and the inhabitants submitted, remaining in their respective countries, and obeying the behests of their new lords. Miletus, as I have already mentioned, had made terms with Cyrus, and so continued at peace. Thus was continental Ionia once more reduced to servitude; and when the Ionians of the islands saw their brethren upon the mainland subjugated, they also, dreading the like, gave themselves up to Cyrus.²

170. It was while the Ionians were in this distress, but still, amid it all, held their meetings, as of old, at the Panionium, that Bias of Priêné, who was present at the festival, recommended (as I am informed) a project of the very highest wisdom, which would, had it been embraced, have enabled the Ionians to become the happiest and most flourishing of the Greeks. He exhorted them "to join in one body, set sail for Sardinia, and there found a single Pan-Ionic city; so they would escape from slavery and rise to great fortune, being masters of the largest island in the world,³ exercising dominion even beyond its bounds; whereas if they stayed in Ionia, he saw no prospect of their ever recovering their lost freedom." Such was the counsel which Bias gave the Ionians in their affliction. Before their misfortunes began, Thales, a man of Miletus, of Phœnician descent, had recommended a different plan. He counselled them to establish a single seat of government, and pointed out

¹ For the site of Abdêra, vide *infra*, vii. 109.

² This statement appears to be too general. Samos certainly maintained her independence till the reign of Darius (vide *infra*, iii. 120).

³ Herodotus appears to have been entirely convinced that there was no island in the world so large as Sardinia. He puts the assertion into the mouth of Histiaëus (v. 106), and again (vi. 2) repeats the statement, without expressing any doubt of the fact.

Teos as the fittest place for it; "for that," he said, "was the centre of Ionia. Their other cities might still continue to enjoy their own laws, just as if they were independent states." This also was good advice.

171. After conquering the Ionians, Harpagus proceeded to attack the Carians, the Caunians, and the Lycians. The Ionians and Æolians were forced to serve in his army. Now, of the above nations the Carians are a race who came into the mainland from the islands. In ancient times they were subjects of king Minos, and went by the name of Leleges, dwelling among the isles, and, so far as I have been able to push my inquiries, never liable to give tribute to any man. They served on board the ships of king Minos whenever he required; and thus, as he was a great conqueror and prospered in his wars, the Carians were in his day the most famous by far of all the nations of the earth. They likewise were the inventors of three things, the use of which was borrowed from them by the Greeks; they were the first to fasten crests on helmets and to put devices on shields, and they also invented handles for shields. In the earlier times shields were without handles, and their wearers managed them by the aid of a leathern thong, by which they were slung round the neck and left shoulder.¹ Long after the time of Minos, the Carians were driven from the islands by the Ionians and Dorians, and so settled upon the mainland. The above is the account which the Cretans give of the Carians: the Carians themselves say very differently. They maintain that they are the aboriginal inhabitants of the part of the mainland where they now dwell,² and never had any other name than that which they still bear; and in proof of this they show an ancient temple of Carian Jove in the country of the Mylasians,³ in which the Mysians and Lydians have the right of worshipping, as brother races to the Carians: for Lydus and Mysus, they say, were brothers of Car. These nations, therefore, have the aforesaid right; but such as are of a different race, even though they have come to use the Carian tongue, are excluded from this temple.

¹ Homer generally represents his heroes as managing their shields in this way (Il. ii. 388; iv. 796; xi. 38; xii. 401, etc.). Sometimes, however, he speaks of shields with handles to them (viii. 193).

² It seems probable that the Carians, who were a kindred nation to the Lydians and the Mysians, belonged originally to the Asiatic continent, and thence spread to the islands.

³ Mylasa was an inland town of Caria, about 20 miles from the sea. It was the capital of the later Carian kingdom (B.C. 385-334).

172. The Caunians,¹ in my judgment, are aboriginals; but by their own account they came from Crete. In their language, either they have approximated to the Carians, or the Carians to them—on this point I cannot speak with certainty. In their customs, however, they differ greatly from the Carians, and not only so, but from all other men. They think it a most honourable practice for friends or persons of the same age, whether they be men, women, or children, to meet together in large companies, for the purpose of drinking wine. Again, on one occasion they determined that they would no longer make use of the foreign temples which had been long established among them, but would worship their own old ancestral gods alone. Then their whole youth took arms, and striking the air with their spears, marched to the Calyndic frontier,² declaring that they were driving out the foreign gods.

173. The Lycians are in good truth anciently from Crete; which island, in former days, was wholly peopled with barbarians. A quarrel arising there between the two sons of Europa, Sarpedon and Minos, as to which of them should be king, Minos, whose party prevailed, drove Sarpedon and his followers into banishment. The exiles sailed to Asia,³ and landed on the Milyan territory. Milyas was the ancient name of the country now inhabited by the Lycians:⁴ the Milyæ of the present day were, in those times, called Solymi.⁵ So long as Sarpedon reigned, his followers kept the name which they brought with them from Crete, and were called Termilæ, as the Lycians still are by those who live in their neighbourhood. But after Lycus, the son of Pandion, banished from Athens by his brother Ægeus, had found a refuge with Sarpedon in the country of these Termilæ, they came, in course of time, to be called from him Lycians. Their customs are partly Cretan,

¹ The Caunians occupied a small district on the coast.

² Calynda was on the borders of Caria and Lycia.

³ It is doubtful whether there is any truth at all in this tale, which would connect the Greeks with Lycia. One thing is clear, namely, that the real Lycian people of history were an entirely distinct race from the Greeks.

⁴ Milyas continued to be a *district* of Lycia in the age of Augustus.

⁵ The Solymi were mentioned by Chærilus, who was contemporary with Herodotus and wrote a poem on the Persian War, as forming a part of the army of Xerxes. Their language, according to him, was Phœnician. That the Pisidians were Solymi is asserted by Pliny. The same people left their name in Lycia to Mount Solyma. Here we seem to have a trace of a Semitic occupation of these countries preceding the Indo-European. (Comp. Hom. Il. vi. 184.) [Acc. to Tacitus, *Hist.* v. 2, some made them the ancestors of the Jews (E.H.B.).]

partly Carian. They have, however, one singular custom in which they differ from every other nation in the world. They take the mother's and not the father's name. Ask a Lycian who he is, and he answers by giving his own name, that of his mother, and so on in the female line. Moreover, if a free woman marry a man who is a slave, their children are full citizens; but if a free man marry a foreign woman, or live with a concubine, even though he be the first person in the State, the children forfeit all the rights of citizenship.

174. Of these nations, the Carians submitted to Harpagus without performing any brilliant exploits. Nor did the Greeks who dwelt in Caria behave with any greater gallantry. Among them were the Cnidians, colonists from Lacedæmon, who occupy a district facing the sea, which is called Triopium. This region adjoins upon the Bybassian Chersonese; and, except a very small space, is surrounded by the sea, being bounded on the north by the Ceramic Gulf, and on the south by the channel towards the islands of Symé and Rhodes. While Harpagus was engaged in the conquest of Ionia, the Cnidians, wishing to make their country an island, attempted to cut through this narrow neck of land, which was no more than five furlongs across from sea to sea. Their whole territory lay inside the isthmus; for where Cnidia ends towards the mainland, the isthmus begins which they were now seeking to cut through. The work had been commenced, and many hands were employed upon it, when it was observed that there seemed to be something unusual and unnatural in the number of wounds that the workmen received, especially about their eyes, from the splintering of the rock. The Cnidians, therefore, sent to Delphi, to inquire what it was that hindered their efforts; and received, according to their own account, the following answer from the oracle:—

Fence not the isthmus off, nor dig it through—
Jove would have made an island, had he wished.

So the Cnidians ceased digging, and when Harpagus advanced with his army, they gave themselves up to him without striking a blow.

175. Above Halicarnassus, and further from the coast, were the Pedasians.¹ With this people, when any evil is about to befall either themselves or their neighbours, the priestess of

¹ Pedasus was reckoned in Caria (*infra*, v. 121). Its exact site is uncertain.

Minerva grows an ample beard. Three times has this marvel happened. They alone, of all the dwellers in Caria, resisted Harpagus for a while, and gave him much trouble, maintaining themselves in a certain mountain called Lida, which they had fortified; but in course of time they also were forced to submit.

176. When Harpagus, after these successes, led his forces into the Xanthian plain,¹ the Lycians of Xanthus² went out to meet him in the field: though but a small band against a numerous host, they engaged in battle, and performed many glorious exploits. Overpowered at last, and forced within their walls, they collected into the citadel their wives and children, all their treasures, and their slaves; and having so done, fired the building, and burnt it to the ground. After this, they bound themselves together by dreadful oaths, and sallying forth against the enemy, died sword in hand, not one escaping. Those Lycians who now claim to be Xanthians, are foreign immigrants, except eighty families, who happened to be absent from the country, and so survived the others. Thus was Xanthus taken by Harpagus,³ and Caunus fell in like manner into his hands; for the Caunians in the main followed the example of the Lycians.

177. While the lower parts of Asia were in this way brought under by Harpagus, Cyrus in person subjected the upper regions, conquering every nation, and not suffering one to escape. Of these conquests I shall pass by the greater portion, and give an account of those only which gave him the most trouble, and are the worthiest of mention. When he had brought all the rest of the continent under his sway, he made war on the Assyrians.⁴

178. Assyria possesses a vast number of great cities,⁵ whereof the most renowned and strongest at this time was Babylon, whither, after the fall of Nineveh, the seat of government had been removed. The following is a description of the place:—The city stands on a broad plain, and is an exact square, a hundred and twenty furlongs in length each way, so that the

¹ The Xanthian plain is to the south of the city, being in fact the alluvial deposit of the river Xanthus.

² The real name of the city which the Greeks called Xanthus seems to have been Arna or Arina. This is confirmed by the monuments of the country.

³ There is reason to believe that the government of Lycia remained in the family of Harpagus.

⁴ Herodotus includes Babylonia in Assyria (vide supra, ch. 106).

⁵ The large number of important cities in Assyria, especially if we include in it Babylonia, is one of the most remarkable features of Assyrian greatness.

entire circuit is four hundred and eighty furlongs.¹ While such is its size, in magnificence there is no other city that approaches to it. It is surrounded, in the first place, by a broad and deep moat, full of water, behind which rises a wall fifty royal cubits in width, and two hundred in height.² (The royal cubit³ is longer by three fingers' breadth than the common cubit.)⁴

179. And here I may not omit to tell the use to which the mould dug out of the great moat was turned, nor the manner wherein the wall was wrought. As fast as they dug the moat the soil which they got from the cutting was made into bricks, and when a sufficient number were completed they baked the bricks in kilns. Then they set to building, and began with bricking the borders of the moat, after which they proceeded to construct the wall itself, using throughout for their cement hot bitumen, and interposing a layer of wattled reeds at every thirtieth course of the bricks.⁵ On the top, along the edges of the wall, they constructed buildings of a single chamber facing one another, leaving between them room for a four-horse chariot to turn. In the circuit of the wall are a hundred gates, all of brass, with brazen lintels and side-posts. The bitumen used in the work was brought to Babylon from the Is, a small stream which flows into the Euphrates at the point where the city of the same name stands, eight days' journey from Babylon. Lumps of bitumen are found in great abundance in this river.

180. The city is divided into two portions by the river which runs through the midst of it. This river is the Euphrates, a broad, deep, swift stream, which rises in Armenia, and empties itself into the Erythræan sea. The city wall is brought down on both sides to the edge of the stream: thence, from the corners of the wall, there is carried along each bank of the river a fence of burnt bricks. The houses are mostly three and four stories high; the streets all run in straight lines, not only those

¹ The vast space enclosed within the walls of Babylon is noticed by Aristotle. (*Polit.* iii. 1, sub fin.).

² The great width and height of the walls are noticed in Scripture (*Jerem.* li. 53, 58). There can be no doubt that the Babylonians and Assyrians surrounded their cities with walls of a height which, to us, is astounding.

³ The Greek metrical system was closely connected with the Babylonian.

⁴ Assuming at present that the Babylonian foot nearly equalled the English, the common cubit would have been 1 foot 8 inches, and the Royal cubit 1 foot 10.4 inches.

⁵ Layers of reeds are found in some of the remains of brick buildings at present existing in Babylonia, but usually at much smaller intervals than here indicated.

parallel to the river, but also the cross streets which lead down to the water-side. At the river end of these cross streets are low gates in the fence that skirts the stream, which are, like the great gates in the outer wall, of brass, and open on the water.

181. The outer wall is the main defence of the city. There is, however, a second inner wall, of less thickness than the first, but very little inferior to it in strength.¹ The centre of each division of the town was occupied by a fortress. In the one stood the palace of the kings,² surrounded by a wall of great strength and size: in the other was the sacred precinct of Jupiter Belus,³ a square enclosure two furlongs each way, with gates of solid brass; which was also remaining in my time. In the middle of the precinct there was a tower of solid masonry, a furlong in length and breadth, upon which was raised a second tower, and on that a third, and so on up to eight. The ascent to the top is on the outside, by a path which winds round all the towers. When one is about half-way up, one finds a resting-place and seats, where persons are wont to sit some time on their way to the summit. On the topmost tower there is a spacious temple, and inside the temple stands a couch of unusual size, richly adorned, with a golden table by its side. There is no statue of any kind set up in the place, nor is the chamber occupied of nights by any one but a single native woman, who, as the Chaldæans, the priests of this god,⁴ affirm, is chosen for himself by the deity out of all the women of the land.

182. They also declare—but I for my part do not credit it—that the god comes down in person into this chamber, and sleeps upon the couch. This is like the story told by the Egyptians of what takes place in their city of Thebes,⁵ where a woman

¹ The "inner wall" here mentioned may have been the wall of Nebuchadnezzar's new city, which lay entirely within the ancient circuit.

² This is the mass or mound still called the Kasr or Palace, "a square of 700 yards in length and breadth." (Rich, First Memoir, p. 22.) It is an immense pile of brickwork, chiefly of the finest kind.

³ The Babylonian worship of Bel is well known to us from Scripture (Isaiah xli. 1; Jerem. l. 2; Apoc. Dan. xii. 16). There is little doubt that he was (at least in the later times), the recognised head of the Babylonian Pantheon, and therefore properly identified by the Greeks with their Zeus or Jupiter.

⁴ The Chaldæans then appear to have been a branch of the great Hamite race of *Akkad*, which inhabited Babylonia from the earliest times. With this race originated the art of writing, the building of cities, the institution of a religious system, and the cultivation of all science, and of astronomy in particular.

⁵ This fable of the god coming personally into his temple was contrary to the Egyptian belief in the nature of the gods. It was only a figurative expression, similar to that of the Jews, who speak of God visiting and dwelling in his holy hill, and was not intended to be taken literally.

always passes the night in the temple of the Theban Jupiter.¹ In each case the woman is said to be debarred all intercourse with men. It is also like the custom of Patara, in Lycia, where the priestess who delivers the oracles, during the time that she is so employed—for at Patara there is not always an oracle,²—is shut up in the temple every night.

183. Below, in the same precinct, there is a second temple, in which is a sitting figure of Jupiter, all of gold. Before the figure stands a large golden table, and the throne whereon it sits, and the base on which the throne is placed, are likewise of gold. The Chaldæans told me that all the gold together was eight hundred talents' weight. Outside the temple are two altars, one of solid gold, on which it is only lawful to offer sucklings; the other a common altar, but of great size, on which the full-grown animals are sacrificed. It is also on the great altar that the Chaldæans burn the frankincense, which is offered to the amount of a thousand talents' weight, every year, at the festival of the God. In the time of Cyrus there was likewise in this temple a figure of a man, twelve cubits high, entirely of solid gold. I myself did not see this figure, but I relate what the Chaldæans report concerning it. Darius, the son of Hystaspes, plotted to carry the statue off, but had not the hardihood to lay his hands upon it. Xerxes, however, the son of Darius, killed the priest who forbade him to move the statue, and took it away.³ Besides the ornaments which I have mentioned, there are a large number of private offerings in this holy precinct.⁴

184. Many sovereigns have ruled over this city of Babylon, and lent their aid to the building of its walls and the adornment of its temples, of whom I shall make mention in my Assyrian history. Among them two were women. Of these, the earlier, called Semiramis, held the throne five generations before the

¹ The *Theban* Jupiter, or god worshipped as the Supreme Being in the city of Thebes, was Ammon (Amun). Herodotus says the *Theban* rather than the Egyptian Jupiter, because various gods were worshipped in various parts of Egypt as supreme.

² Patara lay on the shore, a little to the east of the Xanthus.

³ There can be little doubt that this was done by Xerxes after the revolt of Babylon. Arrian relates that Xerxes not only plundered but *destroyed* the temple on his return from Greece.

⁴ The great temple of Babylon, regarding which the Greeks have left so many notices, is beyond all doubt to be identified with the enormous mound to which the Arabs universally apply the title of *Bâbil*. [For later information on the subject of this great temple, see Hilprecht, *Explorations in Bible Lands*, p. 19 sqq. (E.H.B.).]

later princess. She raised certain embankments well worthy of inspection, in the plain near Babylon, to control the river, which, till then, used to overflow, and flood the whole country round about.

185. The later of the two queens, whose name was Nitocris, a wiser princess than her predecessor, not only left behind her, as memorials of her occupancy of the throne, the works which I shall presently describe, but also, observing the great power and restless enterprise of the Medes, who had taken so large a number of cities, and among them Nineveh, and expecting to be attacked in her turn, made all possible exertions to increase the defences of her empire. And first, whereas the river Euphrates, which traverses the city, ran formerly with a straight course to Babylon, she, by certain excavations which she made at some distance up the stream, rendered it so winding that it comes three several times in sight of the same village, a village in Assyria, which is called Ardericca; and to this day, they who would go from our sea to Babylon, on descending to the river touch three times, and on three different days, at this very place. She also made an embankment along each side of the Euphrates, wonderful both for breadth and height, and dug a basin for a lake a great way above Babylon, close alongside of the stream, which was sunk everywhere to the point where they came to water, and was of such breadth that the whole circuit measured four hundred and twenty furlongs. The soil dug out of this basin was made use of in the embankments along the waterside. When the excavation was finished, she had stones brought, and bordered with them the entire margin of the reservoir. These two things were done, the river made to wind, and the lake excavated, that the stream might be slacker by reason of the number of curves, and the voyage be rendered circuitous, and that at the end of the voyage it might be necessary to skirt the lake and so make a long round. All these works were on that side of Babylon where the passes lay, and the roads into Media were the straightest, and the aim of the queen in making them was to prevent the Medes from holding intercourse with the Babylonians, and so to keep them in ignorance of her affairs.

186. While the soil from the excavation was being thus used for the defence of the city, Nitocris engaged also in another undertaking, a mere by-work compared with those we have already mentioned. The city, as I said, was divided by the river

into two distinct portions. Under the former kings, if a man wanted to pass from one of these divisions to the other, he had to cross in a boat; which must, it seems to me, have been very troublesome. Accordingly, while she was digging the lake, Nitocris bethought herself of turning it to a use which should at once remove this inconvenience, and enable her to leave another monument of her reign over Babylon. She gave orders for the hewing of immense blocks of stone, and when they were ready and the basin was excavated, she turned the entire stream of the Euphrates into the cutting, and thus for a time, while the basin was filling, the natural channel of the river was left dry. Forthwith she set to work, and in the first place lined the banks of the stream within the city with quays of burnt brick, and also bricked the landing-places opposite the river-gates, adopting throughout the same fashion of brickwork which had been used in the town wall; after which, with the materials which had been prepared, she built, as near the middle of the town as possible, a stone bridge, the blocks whereof were bound together with iron and lead. In the daytime square wooden platforms were laid along from pier to pier, on which the inhabitants crossed the stream; but at night they were withdrawn, to prevent people passing from side to side in the dark to commit robberies. When the river had filled the cutting, and the bridge was finished, the Euphrates was turned back again into its ancient bed; and thus the basin, transformed suddenly into a lake, was seen to answer the purpose for which it was made, and the inhabitants, by help of the basin, obtained the advantage of a bridge.

187. It was this same princess by whom a remarkable deception was planned. She had her tomb constructed in the upper part of one of the principal gateways of the city, high above the heads of the passers by, with this inscription cut upon it:—"If there be one among my successors on the throne of Babylon who is in want of treasure, let him open my tomb, and take as much as he chooses,—not, however, unless he be truly in want, for it will not be for his good." This tomb continued untouched until Darius came to the kingdom. To him it seemed a monstrous thing that he should be unable to use one of the gates of the town, and that a sum of money should be lying idle, and moreover inviting his grasp, and he not seize upon it. Now he could not use the gate, because, as he drove through, the dead body would have been over his head. Accordingly he opened

the tomb; but instead of money, found only the dead body, and a writing which said—"Hadst thou not been insatiate of pelf, and careless how thou gottest it, thou wouldst not have broken open the sepulchres of the dead."

188. The expedition of Cyrus was undertaken against the son of this princess, who bore the same name as his father Labynetus, and was king of the Assyrians. The Great King, when he goes to the wars, is always supplied with provisions carefully prepared at home, and with cattle of his own. Water too from the river Choaspes, which flows by Susa, is taken with him for his drink, as that is the only water which the kings of Persia taste.¹ Wherever he travels, he is attended by a number of four-wheeled cars drawn by mules, in which the Choaspes water, ready boiled for use, and stored in flagons of silver, is moved with him from place to place.

189. Cyrus on his way to Babylon came to the banks of the Gyndes,² a stream which, rising in the Matienian mountains, runs through the country of the Dardanians, and empties itself into the river Tigris. The Tigris, after receiving the Gyndes, flows on by the city of Opis, and discharges its waters into the Erythræan sea. When Cyrus reached this stream, which could only be passed in boats, one of the sacred white horses accompanying his march, full of spirit and high mettle, walked into the water, and tried to cross by himself; but the current seized him, swept him along with it, and drowned him in its depths. Cyrus, enraged at the insolence of the river, threatened so to break its strength that in future even women should cross it easily without wetting their knees. Accordingly he put off for a time his attack on Babylon, and, dividing his army into two parts, he marked out by ropes one hundred and eighty trenches on each side of the Gyndes, leading off from it in all directions, and setting his army to dig, some on one side of the river, some on the other, he accomplished his threat by the aid of so great a number of hands, but not without losing thereby the whole summer season.

190. Having, however, thus wreaked his vengeance on the Gyndes, by dispersing it through three hundred and sixty channels, Cyrus, with the first approach of the ensuing spring, marched forward against Babylon. The Babylonians, encamped without their walls, awaited his coming. A battle was fought

¹ This statement of Herodotus is echoed by various writers.

² The Gyndes is undoubtedly the *Diyâlah*.

at a short distance from the city, in which the Babylonians were defeated by the Persian king, whereupon they withdrew within their defences. Here they shut themselves up, and made light of his siege, having laid in a store of provisions for many years in preparation against this attack; for then they saw Cyrus conquering nation after nation, they were convinced that he would never stop, and that their turn would come at last.

191. Cyrus was now reduced to great perplexity, as time went on and he made no progress against the place. In this distress either some one made the suggestion to him, or he bethought himself of a plan, which he proceeded to put in execution. He placed a portion of his army at the point where the river enters the city, and another body at the back of the place where it issues forth, with orders to march into the town by the bed of the stream, as soon as the water became shallow enough: he then himself drew off with the unwarlike portion of his host, and made for the place where Nitocris dug the basin for the river, where he did exactly what she had done formerly: he turned the Euphrates by a canal into the basin, which was then a marsh, on which the river sank to such an extent that the natural bed of the stream became fordable. Hereupon the Persians who had been left for the purpose at Babylon by the river-side, entered the stream, which had now sunk so as to reach about midway up a man's thigh, and thus got into the town. Had the Babylonians been apprised of what Cyrus was about, or had they noticed their danger, they would never have allowed the Persians to enter the city, but would have destroyed them utterly; for they would have made fast all the street-gates which gave upon the river, and mounting upon the walls along both sides of the stream, would so have caught the enemy as it were in a trap. But, as it was, the Persians came upon them by surprise and so took the city. Owing to the vast size of the place, the inhabitants of the central parts (as the residents at Babylon declare) long after the outer portions of the town were taken, knew nothing of what had chanced, but as they were engaged in a festival, continued dancing and revelling until they learnt the capture but too certainly. Such, then, were the circumstances of the first taking of Babylon.¹

192. Among many proofs which I shall bring forward of the

¹ Herodotus intends to contrast this *first* capture with the *second* capture by Darius Hystaspes of which he speaks in the latter portion of the third Book.

power and resources of the Babylonians, the following is of special account. The whole country under the dominion of the Persians, besides paying a fixed tribute, is parcelled out into divisions, which have to supply food to the Great King and his army during different portions of the year. Now out of the twelve months which go to a year, the district of Babylon furnishes food during four, the other regions of Asia during eight; by which it appears that Assyria, in respect of resources, is one-third of the whole of Asia. Of all the Persian governments, or satrapies as they are called by the natives, this is by far the best. When Tritantæchmes, son of Artabazus,¹ held it of the king, it brought him in an artaba of silver every day. The artaba is a Persian measure,² and holds three chœnixes more than the medimnus of the Athenians. He also had, belonging to his own private stud, besides war-horses, eight hundred stallions and sixteen thousand mares, twenty to each stallion. Besides which he kept so great a number of Indian hounds,³ that four large villages of the plain were exempted from all other charges on condition of finding them in food.

193. But little rain falls in Assyria,⁴ enough, however, to make the corn begin to sprout, after which the plant is nourished and the ears formed by means of irrigation from the river.⁵ For the river does not, as in Egypt, overflow the corn-lands of its own accord, but is spread over them by the hand, or by the help of engines.⁶ The whole of Babylonia is, like Egypt, inter-

¹ The name of Tritantæchmes is of considerable interest, because it points to the Vedic traditions which the Persians brought with them from the Indus, and of the currency of which in the time of Xerxes we have thus distinct evidence. The name means "strong as Tritan"—this title, which etymologically means "three-bodied," being the Sanscrit and Zend form of the famous Feridun of Persian romance, who divided the world between his three sons, Selm, Tur, and Erij.

² This is the same name as the *ardeb* of modern Egypt, and, like the *medimnus*, is a corn measure. The *ardeb* is nearly five English bushels.

³ Models of favourite dogs are frequently found in excavating the cities of Babylonia. Some may be seen in the British Museum.

⁴ Rain is very rare in Babylonia during the summer months, and productiveness depends entirely on irrigation. During the spring there are constant showers, and at other times of the year rain falls frequently, but irregularly, and never in great quantities. The heaviest is in December. In ancient times, when irrigation was carried to a far greater extent than it is at present, the meteorology of the country may probably have been different.

⁵ At the present day it is not usual to trust even the first sprouting of the corn to nature. The lands are laid under water for a few days before the corn is sown; the water is then withdrawn, and the seed scattered upon the moistened soil.

⁶ The engine intended by Herodotus seems to have been the common

sected with canals. The largest of them all, which runs towards the winter sun, and is impassable except in boats, is carried from the Euphrates into another stream, called the Tigris, the river upon which the town of Nineveh formerly stood. Of all the countries that we know there is none which is so fruitful in grain. It makes no pretension indeed of growing the fig, the olive, the vine, or any other tree of the kind; but in grain it is so fruitful as to yield commonly two-hundred-fold, and when the production is the greatest, even three-hundred-fold. The blade of the wheat-plant and barley-plant is often four fingers in breadth. As for the millet and the sesame, I shall not say to what height they grow, though within my own knowledge; for I am not ignorant that what I have already written concerning the fruitfulness of Babylonia must seem incredible to those who have never visited the country.¹ The only oil they use is made from the sesame-plant.² Palm-trees grow in great numbers over the whole of the flat country,³ mostly of the kind which bears fruit, and this fruit supplies them with bread, wine, and honey. They are cultivated like the fig-tree in all respects, among others in this. The natives tie the fruit of the male-palms, as they are called by the Greeks, to the branches of the date-bearing palm, to let the gall-fly enter the dates and ripen them, and to prevent the fruit from falling off. The male-palms, like the wild fig-trees, have usually the gall-fly in their fruit.

194. But that which surprises me most in the land, after the city itself, I will now proceed to mention. The boats which come down the river to Babylon are circular, and made of skins. The frames, which are of willow, are cut in the country of the Armenians above Assyria, and on these, which serve for hulls, a covering of skins is stretched outside, and thus the boats are made, without either stem or stern, quite round like a shield. They are then entirely filled with straw, and their

hand-swipe, to which alone the name of *κηλωνήϊον* would properly apply. The ordinary method of irrigation at the present day is by the help of oxen, which draw the water from the river to the top of the bank by means of ropes passed over a roller working between two upright posts.

¹ The fertility of Babylonia is celebrated by a number of ancient writers.

² This is still the case with respect to the people of the plains. The olive is cultivated on the flanks of Mount Zagros, but Babylonia did not extend so far.

³ There is reason to believe that anciently the country was very much more thickly wooded than it is at present. The palm will grow wherever water is brought. In ancient times the whole country between the rivers, and the greater portion of the tract intervening between the Tigris and the mountains, was artificially irrigated.

cargo is put on board, after which they are suffered to float down the stream. Their chief freight is wine, stored in casks made of the wood of the palm-tree. They are managed by two men who stand upright in them, each plying an oar, one pulling and the other pushing.¹ The boats are of various sizes, some larger, some smaller; the biggest reach as high as five thousand talents' burthen. Each vessel has a live ass on board; those of larger size have more than one. When they reach Babylon, the cargo is landed and offered for sale; after which the men break up their boats, sell the straw and the frames, and loading their asses with the skins, set off on their way back to Armenia. The current is too strong to allow a boat to return up-stream, for which reason they make their boats of skins rather than wood. On their return to Armenia they build fresh boats for the next voyage.

195. The dress of the Babylonians is a linen tunic reaching to the feet, and above it another tunic made in wool, besides which they have a short white cloak thrown round them, and shoes of a peculiar fashion, not unlike those worn by the Boeotians. They have long hair, wear turbans on their heads, and anoint their whole body with perfumes.² Every one carries a seal,³ and a walking-stick, carved at the top into the form of an apple, a rose, a lily, an eagle, or something similar;⁴ for it is not their habit to use a stick without an ornament.

196. Of their customs, whereof I shall now proceed to give an account, the following (which I understand belongs to them in common with the Illyrian tribe of the Eneti⁵) is the wisest in my judgment. Once a year in each village the maidens of age

¹ Boats of this kind, closely resembling coracles, are represented in the Nineveh sculptures, and still ply on the Euphrates.

² The dress of the Babylonians appears on the cylinders to be a species of flounced robe, reaching from their neck to their feet. In some representations there is an appearance of a division into two garments; the upper one being a sort of short jacket or tippet, flounced like the under-robe or petticoat. The long hair of the Babylonians is very conspicuous on the cylinders. It either depends in lengthy tresses which fall over the back and shoulders, or is gathered into what seems a club behind. There are several varieties of head-dress; the most usual are a low cap or turban, from which two curved horns branch out, and a high crown or mitre, the appearance of which is very remarkable.

³ The Babylonian cylinders are undoubtedly the "seals" of Herodotus. Many impressions of them have been found upon clay-tablets.

⁴ Upon the cylinders the Babylonians are frequently, but not invariably, represented with sticks. In the Assyrian sculptures the officers of the court have always sticks, used apparently as staves of office.

⁵ The Eneti or Heneti are the same with the Venetians of later times (Liv. i. 1).

to marry were collected all together into one place; while the men stood round them in a circle. Then a herald called up the damsels one by one, and offered them for sale. He began with the most beautiful. When she was sold for no small sum of money, he offered for sale the one who came next to her in beauty. All of them were sold to be wives. The richest of the Babylonians who wished to wed bid against each other for the loveliest maidens, while the humbler wife-seekers, who were indifferent about beauty, took the more homely damsels with marriage-portions. For the custom was that when the herald had gone through the whole number of the beautiful damsels, he should then call up the ugliest—a cripple, if there chanced to be one—and offer her to the men, asking who would agree to take her with the smallest marriage-portion. And the man who offered to take the smallest sum had her assigned to him. The marriage-portions were furnished by the money paid for the beautiful damsels, and thus the fairer maidens portioned out the uglier. No one was allowed to give his daughter in marriage to the man of his choice, nor might any one carry away the damsel whom he had purchased without finding bail really and truly to make her his wife; if, however, it turned out that they did not agree, the money might be paid back. All who liked might come even from distant villages and bid for the women. This was the best of all their customs, but it has now fallen into disuse.¹ They have lately hit upon a very different plan to save their maidens from violence, and prevent their being torn from them and carried to distant cities, which is to bring up their daughters to be courtesans. This is now done by all the poorer of the common people, who since the conquest have been maltreated by their lords, and have had ruin brought upon their families.

197. The following custom seems to me the wisest of their institutions next to the one lately praised. They have no physicians, but when a man is ill, they lay him in the public square, and the passers-by come up to him, and if they have ever had his disease themselves or have known any one who has suffered from it, they give him advice, recommending him to do whatever they found good in their own case, or in the case known to them; and no one is allowed to pass the sick man in silence without asking him what his ailment is.

¹ Writers of the Augustan age mention this custom as still existing in their day.

198. They bury their dead in honey,¹ and have funeral lamentations like the Egyptians. When a Babylonian has consorted with his wife, he sits down before a censer of burning incense, and the woman sits opposite to him. At dawn of day they wash; for till they are washed they will not touch any of their common vessels. This practice is observed also by the Arabians.

199. The Babylonians have one most shameful custom. Every woman born in the country must once in her life go and sit down in the precinct of Venus, and there consort with a stranger. Many of the wealthier sort, who are too proud to mix with the others, drive in covered carriages to the precinct, followed by a goodly train of attendants, and there take their station. But the larger number seat themselves within the holy enclosure with wreaths of string about their heads,—and here there is always a great crowd, some coming and others going; lines of cord mark out paths in all directions among the women, and the strangers pass along them to make their choice. A woman who has once taken her seat is not allowed to return home till one of the strangers throws a silver coin into her lap, and takes her with him beyond the holy ground. When he throws the coin he says these words—"The goddess Mylitta prosper thee." (Venus is called Mylitta by the Assyrians.) The silver coin may be of any size; it cannot be refused, for that is forbidden by the law, since once thrown it is sacred. The woman goes with the first man who throws her money, and rejects no one. When she has gone with him, and so satisfied the goddess, she returns home, and from that time forth no gift however great will prevail with her. Such of the women as are tall and beautiful are soon released, but others who are ugly have to stay a long time before they can fulfil the law. Some have waited three or four years in the precinct.² A custom very much like this is found also in certain parts of the island of Cyprus.

200. Such are the customs of the Babylonians generally. There are likewise three tribes among them who eat nothing but fish. These are caught and dried in the sun, after which they are brayed in a mortar, and strained through a linen sieve.

¹ Modern researches show two modes of burial to have prevailed in ancient Babylonia. *Ordinarily* the bodies seem to have been compressed into urns and baked, or burnt. Thousands of funeral urns are found on the sites of the ancient cities. Coffins are also found, but rarely.

² This unhallowed custom is mentioned among the abominations of the religion of the Babylonians in the book of Baruch (vi. 43).

Some prefer to make cakes of this material, while others bake it into a kind of bread.

201. When Cyrus had achieved the conquest of the Babylonians, he conceived the desire of bringing the Massagetæ under his dominion. Now the Massagetæ are said to be a great and warlike nation, dwelling eastward, toward the rising of the sun, beyond the river Araxes, and opposite the Issedonians. By many they are regarded as a Scythian race.

202. As for the Araxes, it is, according to some accounts, larger, according to others smaller than the Ister (Danube). It has islands in it, many of which are said to be equal in size to Lesbos. The men who inhabit them feed during the summer on roots of all kinds, which they dig out of the ground, while they store up the fruits, which they gather from the trees at the fitting season, to serve them as food in the winter-time. Besides the trees whose fruit they gather for this purpose, they have also a tree which bears the strangest produce. When they are met together in companies they throw some of it upon the fire round which they are sitting, and presently, by the mere smell of the fumes which it gives out in burning, they grow drunk, as the Greeks do with wine. More of the fruit is then thrown on the fire, and, their drunkenness increasing, they often jump up and begin to dance and sing. Such is the account which I have heard of this people.

The river Araxes, like the Gyndes, which Cyrus dispersed into three hundred and sixty channels, has its source in the country of the Matienians. It has forty mouths, whereof all, except one, end in bogs and swamps. These bogs and swamps are said to be inhabited by a race of men who feed on raw fish, and clothe themselves with the skins of seals. The other mouth of the river flows with a clear course into the Caspian Sea.¹

203. The Caspian is a sea by itself, having no connection with any other.² The sea frequented by the Greeks, that beyond the Pillars of Hercules, which is called the Atlantic, and also the Erythræan, are all one and the same sea. But the Caspian is a distinct sea, lying by itself, in length fifteen days' voyage with a row-boat, in breadth, at the broadest part, eight days'

¹ The geographical knowledge of Herodotus seems to be nowhere so much at fault as in his account of this river. He appears to have confused together the information which had reached him concerning two or three distinct streams.

² Here the geographical knowledge of Herodotus was much in advance of his age.

voyage. Along its western shore runs the chain of the Caucasus, the most extensive and loftiest of all mountain-ranges.¹ Many and various are the tribes by which it is inhabited, most of whom live entirely on the wild fruits of the forest. In these forests certain trees are said to grow, from the leaves of which, pounded and mixed with water, the inhabitants make a dye, wherewith they paint upon their clothes the figures of animals; and the figures so impressed never wash out, but last as though they had been inwoven in the cloth from the first, and wear as long as the garment.

204. On the west then, as I have said, the Caspian Sea is bounded by the range of Caucasus. On the east it is followed by a vast plain, stretching out interminably before the eye,² the greater portion of which is possessed by those Massagetæ, against whom Cyrus was now so anxious to make an expedition. Many strong motives weighed with him and urged him on—his birth especially, which seemed something more than human, and his good fortune in all his former wars, wherein he had always found, that against what country soever he turned his arms, it was impossible for that people to escape.

205. At this time the Massagetæ were ruled by a queen, named Tomyris, who at the death of her husband, the late king, had mounted the throne. To her Cyrus sent ambassadors, with instructions to court her on his part, pretending that he wished to take her to wife. Tomyris, however, aware that it was her kingdom, and not herself, that he courted, forbade the men to approach. Cyrus, therefore, finding that he did not advance his designs by this deceit, marched towards the Araxes, and openly displaying his hostile intentions, set to work to construct a bridge on which his army might cross the river, and began building towers upon the boats which were to be used in the passage.

206. While the Persian leader was occupied in these labours, Tomyris sent a herald to him, who said, "King of the Medes, cease to press this enterprise, for thou canst not know if what thou art doing will be of real advantage to thee. Be content to rule in peace thy own kingdom, and bear to see us reign over the countries that are ours to govern. As, however, I know

¹ This was true within the limits of our author's geographical knowledge. Peaks in the Caucasus attain the height of over 17,000 feet.

² The deserts of Kharesm, Kizilkoum, etc., the most southern portion of the Steppe region.

thou wilt not choose to hearken to this counsel, since there is nothing thou less desirest than peace and quietness, come now, if thou art so mightily desirous of meeting the Massagetæ in arms, leave thy useless toil of bridge-making; let us retire three days' march from the river bank, and do thou come across with thy soldiers; or, if thou likest better to give us battle on thy side the stream, retire thyself an equal distance." Cyrus, on this offer, called together the chiefs of the Persians, and laid the matter before them, requesting them to advise him what he should do. All the votes were in favour of his letting Tomyris cross the stream, and giving battle on Persian ground.

207. But Cræsus the Lydian, who was present at the meeting of the chiefs, disapproved of this advice; he therefore rose, and thus delivered his sentiments in opposition to it: "Oh! my king! I promised thee long since, that, as Jove had given me into thy hands, I would, to the best of my power, avert impending danger from thy house. Alas! my own sufferings, by their very bitterness, have taught me to be keen-sighted of dangers. If thou deemest thyself an immortal, and thine army an army of immortals, my counsel will doubtless be thrown away upon thee. But if thou feelest thyself to be a man, and a ruler of men, lay this first to heart, that there is a wheel on which the affairs of men revolve, and that its movement forbids the same man to be always fortunate. Now concerning the matter in hand, my judgment runs counter to the judgment of thy other counsellors. For if thou agreest to give the enemy entrance into thy country, consider what risk is run! Lose the battle, and therewith thy whole kingdom is lost. For assuredly, the Massagetæ, if they win the fight, will not return to their homes, but will push forward against the states of thy empire. Or if thou gainest the battle, why, then thou gainest far less than if thou wert across the stream, where thou mightest follow up thy victory. For against thy loss, if they defeat thee on thine own ground, must be set theirs in like case. Rout their army on the other side of the river, and thou mayest push at once into the heart of their country. Moreover, were it not disgrace intolerable for Cyrus the son of Cambyzes to retire before and yield ground to a woman? My counsel therefore is, that we cross the stream, and pushing forward as far as they shall fall back, then seek to get the better of them by stratagem. I am told they are unacquainted with the good things on which the Persians live, and have never tasted the great delights of

life. Let us then prepare a feast for them in our camp; let sheep be slaughtered without stint, and the winecups be filled full of noble liquor, and let all manner of dishes be prepared: then leaving behind us our worst troops, let us fall back towards the river. Unless I very much mistake, when they see the good fare set out, they will forget all else and fall to. Then it will remain for us to do our parts manfully."

208. Cyrus, when the two plans were thus placed in contrast before him, changed his mind, and preferring the advice which Cræsus had given, returned for answer to Tomyris, that she should retire, and that he would cross the stream. She therefore retired, as she had engaged; and Cyrus, giving Cræsus into the care of his son Cambyses (whom he had appointed to succeed him on the throne), with strict charge to pay him all respect and treat him well, if the expedition failed of success; and sending them both back to Persia, crossed the river with his army.

209. The first night after the passage, as he slept in the enemy's country, a vision appeared to him. He seemed to see in his sleep the eldest of the sons of Hystaspes, with wings upon his shoulders, shadowing with the one wing Asia, and Europe with the other. Now Hystaspes, the son of Arsames, was of the race of the Achæmenidæ,¹ and his eldest son, Darius, was at that time scarce twenty years old; wherefore, not being of age to go to the wars, he had remained behind in Persia. When Cyrus woke from his sleep, and turned the vision over in his mind, it seemed to him no light matter. He therefore sent for Hystaspes, and taking him aside said, "Hystaspes, thy son is discovered to be plotting against me and my crown. I will tell thee how I know it so certainly. The gods watch over my safety, and warn me beforehand of every danger. Now last night, as I lay in my bed, I saw in a vision the eldest of thy sons with wings upon his shoulders, shadowing with the one wing Asia, and Europe with the other. From this it is certain, beyond all possible doubt, that he is engaged in some plot against me. Return thou then at once to Persia, and be sure, when I come back from conquering the Massagetæ, to have thy son ready to produce before me, that I may examine him."

¹ It may be observed here that the inscriptions confirm Herodotus thus far. Darius was son of Hystaspes (Vashtáspa) and grandson of Arsames (Arsháma). He traced his descent through four ancestors to Achæmenes (Hakhámanish).

210. Thus Cyrus spoke, in the belief that he was plotted against by Darius; but he missed the true meaning of the dream, which was sent by God to forewarn him, that he was to die then and there, and that his kingdom was to fall at last to Darius.

Hystaspes made answer to Cyrus in these words:—"Heaven forbid, sire, that there should be a Persian living who would plot against thee! If such an one there be, may a speedy death overtake him! Thou foundest the Persians a race of slaves, thou hast made them free men: thou foundest them subject to others, thou hast made them lords of all. If a vision has announced that my son is practising against thee, lo, I resign him into thy hands to deal with as thou wilt." Hystaspes, when he had thus answered, recrossed the Araxes and hastened back to Persia, to keep a watch on his son Darius.

211. Meanwhile Cyrus, having advanced a day's march from the river, did as Cræsus had advised him, and, leaving the worthless portion of his army in the camp, drew off with his good troops towards the river. Soon afterwards, a detachment of the Massagetæ, one-third of their entire army, led by Spargapises, son of the queen Tomyris, coming up, fell upon the body which had been left behind by Cyrus, and on their resistance put them to the sword. Then, seeing the banquet prepared, they sat down and began to feast. When they had eaten and drunk their fill, and were now sunk in sleep, the Persians under Cyrus arrived, slaughtered a great multitude, and made even a larger number prisoners. Among these last was Spargapises himself.

212. When Tomyris heard what had befallen her son and her army, she sent a herald to Cyrus, who thus addressed the conqueror:—"Thou bloodthirsty Cyrus, pride not thyself on this poor success: it was the grape-juice—which, when ye drink it, makes you so mad, and as ye swallow it down brings up to your lips such bold and wicked words—it was this poison wherewith thou didst ensnare my child, and so overcamest him, not in fair open fight. Now hearken what I advise, and be sure I advise thee for thy good. Restore my son to me and get thee from the land unharmed, triumphant over a third part of the host of the Massagetæ. Refuse, and I swear by the sun, the sovereign lord of the Massagetæ, bloodthirsty as thou art, I will give thee thy fill of blood."

213. To the words of this message Cyrus paid no manner of

regard. As for Spargapises, the son of the queen, when the wine went off, and he saw the extent of his calamity, he made request to Cyrus to release him from his bonds; then, when his prayer was granted, and the fetters were taken from his limbs, as soon as his hands were free, he destroyed himself.

214. Tomyris, when she found that Cyrus paid no heed to her advice, collected all the forces of her kingdom, and gave him battle. Of all the combats in which the barbarians have engaged among themselves, I reckon this to have been the fiercest. The following, as I understand, was the manner of it:—First, the two armies stood apart and shot their arrows at each other; then, when their quivers were empty, they closed and fought hand-to-hand with lances and daggers; and thus they continued fighting for a length of time, neither choosing to give ground. At length the Massagetæ prevailed. The greater part of the army of the Persians was destroyed and Cyrus himself fell, after reigning nine and twenty years. Search was made among the slain by order of the queen for the body of Cyrus, and when it was found she took a skin, and, filling it full of human blood, she dipped the head of Cyrus in the gore, saying, as she thus insulted the corse, “I live and have conquered thee in fight, and yet by thee am I ruined, for thou tookest my son with guile; but thus I make good my threat, and give thee thy fill of blood.” Of the many different accounts which are given of the death of Cyrus, this which I have followed appears to me most worthy of credit.¹

215. In their dress and mode of living the Massagetæ resemble the Scythians. They fight both on horseback and on foot, neither method is strange to them: they use bows and lances, but their favourite weapon is the battle-axe.² Their arms are all either of gold or brass. For their spear-points, and arrow-heads, and for their battle-axes, they make use of brass; for

¹ It may be questioned whether the account, which out of many seemed to our author most worthy of credit, was ever really the most credible. Unwittingly Herodotus was drawn towards the most romantic and poetic version of each story, and what he admired most seemed to him the likeliest to be true. According to Xenophon, Cyrus died peacefully in his bed (Cyrop. viii. vii.); according to Ctesias, he was severely wounded in a battle which he fought with the Derbices, and died in camp of his wounds. Of these two authors, Ctesias, perhaps, is the less untrustworthy. On his authority, conjoined with that of Herodotus, it may be considered certain, 1. That Cyrus died a violent death; and 2. That he received his death-wound in fight; but against what enemy must continue a doubtful point.

² The *σάγαις* is in all probability the *khanjar* of modern Persia, a short, curved, double-edged dagger, almost universally worn.

in their mouths, he informed his lord, and by his command brought the children into his presence. Psammetichus then himself heard them say the word, upon which he proceeded to make inquiry what people there was who called anything "becos," and hereupon he learnt that "becos" was the Phrygian name for bread. In consideration of this circumstance the Egyptians yielded their claims, and admitted the greater antiquity of the Phrygians.

3. That these were the real facts I learnt at Memphis from the priests of Vulcan. The Greeks, among other foolish tales, relate that Psammetichus had the children brought up by women whose tongues he had previously cut out; but the priests said their bringing up was such as I have stated above. I got much other information also from conversation with these priests while I was at Memphis, and I even went to Heliopolis and to Thebes,¹ expressly to try whether the priests of those places would agree in their accounts with the priests at Memphis. The Heliopolitans have the reputation of being the best skilled in history of all the Egyptians.² What they told me concerning their religion it is not my intention to repeat, except the names of their deities, which I believe all men know equally. If I relate anything else concerning these matters, it will only be when compelled to do so by the course of my narrative.³

4. Now with regard to mere human matters, the accounts which they gave, and in which all agreed, were the following. The Egyptians, they said, were the first to discover the solar year, and to portion out its course into twelve parts. They obtained this knowledge from the stars. (To my mind they contrive their year much more cleverly than the Greeks, for these last every other year intercalate a whole month,⁴ but the Egyptians, dividing the year into twelve months of thirty days each, add every year a space of five days besides, whereby the

¹ The name of Thebes is almost always written in the plural by the Greeks and Romans—*Θῆβαι*, *Thebæ*—but Pliny writes, "Thebe portarum centum nobilis fama." [This splendid city was for centuries the capital of Egypt. It was sacked by Asurbanipal (Sardanapalus) B.C. 663. Referred to in O. T. (Nahum iii. 8) as No-Amon.—E. H. B.]

² Heliopolis ("City of the Sun") was the great seat of learning, and the university of Egypt.

³ For instances of the reserve which Herodotus here promises, see chapters 45, 46, 47, 48, 61, 62, 65, 81, 132, 170, and 171. The secrecy in matters of religion, which was no doubt enjoined upon Herodotus by the Egyptian priests, did not seem strange to a Greek, who was accustomed to it in the "mysteries" of his own countrymen.

⁴ Vide supra, i. 32, and note ad loc.

circuit of the seasons is made to return with uniformity.¹) The Egyptians, they went on to affirm, first brought into use the names of the twelve gods, which the Greeks adopted from them; and first erected altars, images, and temples to the gods; and also first engraved upon stone the figures of animals. In most of these cases they proved to me that what they said was true. And they told me that the first man² who ruled over Egypt was Mên, and that in his time all Egypt, except the Thebaic canton, was a marsh,³ none of the land below lake Moëris then showing itself above the surface of the water. This is a distance of seven days' sail from the sea up the river.

5. What they said of their country seemed to me very reasonable. For any one who sees Egypt, without having heard a word about it before, must perceive, if he has only common powers of observation, that the Egypt to which the Greeks go in their ships is an acquired country, the gift of the river.⁴ The same is true of the land above the lake, to the distance of three days' voyage, concerning which the Egyptians say nothing, but which is exactly the same kind of country.

The following is the general character of the region. In the first place, on approaching it by sea, when you are still a day's sail from the land, if you let down a sounding-line you will bring up mud, and find yourself in eleven fathoms' water, which shows that the soil washed down by the stream extends to that distance.

6. The length of the country along shore, according to the bounds that we assign to Egypt, namely from the Plinthinêtic gulf⁵ to lake Serbônis, which extends along the base of Mount Casius, is sixty schoenes.⁶ The nations whose territories are

¹ This at once proves they intercalated the quarter day, making their year to consist of $365\frac{1}{4}$ days, without which the seasons could not return to the same periods. The fact of Herodotus not understanding their method of intercalation does not argue that the Egyptians were ignorant of it.

² According to the chronological tables of the Egyptians the gods were represented to have reigned first, and after them Menes; and the same is found recorded in the Turin Papyrus of Kings, as well as in Manetho and other writers. [Menes (or Mena), perhaps a legendary figure. Some give his date as 3300 B.C., others much earlier.—E. H. B.]

³ Note, besides the improbability of such a change, the fact that Menes was the reputed founder of Memphis, which is far to the north of this lake; and that Busiris, near the coast (the reputed burial-place of Osiris), Buto, Pelusium, and other towns of the Delta, were admitted by the Egyptians to be of the earliest date.

⁴ Vide infra, ch. 10.

⁵ Plinthiné was a town near the Lake Mareotis.

⁶ The real length of the coast from the Bay of Plinthiné at Taposiris, or at Plinthiné, even to the *eastern* end of the Lake Serbonis, is by the shore little more than 300 English miles.

scanty measure them by the fathom; those whose bounds are less confined, by the furlong; those who have an ample territory, by the parasang; but if men have a country which is very vast, they measure it by the schœne. Now the length of the parasang is thirty furlongs,¹ but the schœne, which is an Egyptian measure, is sixty furlongs.² Thus the coast-line of Egypt would extend a length of three thousand six hundred furlongs.

7. From the coast inland as far as Heliopolis the breadth of Egypt is considerable, the country is flat, without springs, and full of swamps.³ The length of the route from the sea up to Heliopolis is almost exactly the same as that of the road which runs from the altar of the twelve gods at Athens⁴ to the temple of Olympian Jove at Pisa.⁵ If a person made a calculation he would find but a very little difference between the two routes, not more than about fifteen furlongs; for the road from Athens to Pisa falls short of fifteen hundred furlongs by exactly fifteen, whereas the distance of Heliopolis from the sea is just the round number.⁶

8. As one proceeds beyond Heliopolis⁷ up the country, Egypt becomes narrow, the Arabian range of hills, which has a direction from north to south, shutting it in upon the one side, and the Libyan range upon the other. The former ridge runs on without a break, and stretches away to the sea called the Erythræan; it contains the quarries⁸ whence the stone was cut

¹ See note on Book v. ch. 53.

² This would be more than 36,000 English feet, or nearly 7 miles. The Greek *σχόινος*, "rope," is the same word which signifies rush, of which ropes are still made in Egypt and in other countries.

³ Heliopolis stood on the edge of the desert, about 4½ miles to the E. of the apex of the Delta; but the alluvial land of the Delta extended 5 miles farther to the eastward of that city.

⁴ The altar of the twelve gods at Athens stood in the Forum, and seems to have served, like the gilt pillar (*milliarium aureum*) in the Forum at Rome, as a central point from which to measure distances.

⁵ This mention of Pisa is curious, considering that it had been destroyed so long before (B.C. 572) by the Eleans (Pausan. vi. xxii. § 2), and that it had certainly not been rebuilt by the close of the Peloponnesian war. Probably Herodotus intends Olympia itself rather than the ancient town, which was six stades distant.

⁶ Fifteen hundred furlongs (stadest), about equal to 173 English miles.

⁷ The site of Heliopolis is still marked by the massive walls that surrounded it, and by a granite obelisk bearing the name of Osirtasen I. of the 12th dynasty, dating about 3900 years ago. It was one of two that stood before the entrance to the temple of the Sun. [The Biblical "ON," Gen. xli. 45; in Jeremiah called Bettashemesh ("house of the sun"): Hastings, *Dict. of Bible*, s.v. ON.—E. H. B.]

⁸ The quarries from which the stone for the casing of the pyramids was taken are in that part of the modern El-Mokuttum range of hills called by Strabo the "Trojan mountain," and now Gebel Māsarah or Toora Māsarah, from the two villages below them on the Nile.

for the pyramids of Memphis: and this is the point where it ceases its first direction, and bends away in the manner above indicated.¹ In its greatest length from east to west it is, as I have been informed, a distance of two months' journey; towards the extreme east its skirts produce frankincense. Such are the chief features of this range. On the Libyan side, the other ridge whereon the pyramids stand, is rocky and covered with sand; its direction is the same as that of the Arabian ridge in the first part of its course. Above Heliopolis, then, there is no great breadth of territory for such a country as Egypt, but during four days' sail Egypt is narrow;² the valley between the two ranges is a level plain, and seemed to me to be, at the narrowest point, not more than two hundred furlongs across from the Arabian to the Libyan hills. Above this point Egypt again widens.

9. From Heliopolis to Thebes is nine days' sail up the river; the distance is eighty-one schœnes, or 4860 furlongs.³ If we now put together the several measurements of the country we shall find that the distance along shore is, as I stated above, 3600 furlongs, and the distance from the sea inland to Thebes 6120 furlongs. Further, it is a distance of eighteen hundred furlongs from Thebes to the place called Elephantiné.

10. The greater portion of the country above described seemed to me to be, as the priests declared, a tract gained by the inhabitants. For the whole region above Memphis, lying between the two ranges of hills that have been spoken of, appeared evidently to have formed at one time a gulf of the sea. It resembles (to compare small things with great) the parts about Ilium and Teuthrania, Ephesus, and the plain of the Mæander.⁴ In all these regions the land has been formed by rivers, whereof the greatest is not to compare for size with any one of the five mouths of the Nile.⁵ I could mention other rivers also, far inferior to the Nile in magnitude, that have effected very great

¹ That is, towards the Erythræan Sea, or Arabian Gulf.

² That is, from Heliopolis southward; and he says it becomes broader again beyond that point. His 200 stadia are about $22\frac{1}{2}$ to 23 miles.

³ The nine days' sail, which Herodotus reckons at 4860 stadia, would give about 552 Eng. miles; but the distance is only about 421, even following the course of the river.

⁴ In some of these places the gain of the land upon the sea has been very great. This is particularly the case at the mouth of the Mæander, where the alluvial plain has advanced in the historic times a distance of 12 or 13 miles.

⁵ This signifies the natural branches of the Nile; and when seven are reckoned, they include the two artificial ones.

changes. Among these not the least is the Acheloüs, which, after passing through Acarnania, empties itself into the sea opposite the islands called Echinades,¹ and has already joined one-half of them to the continent.²

11. In Arabia, not far from Egypt, there is a long and narrow gulf running inland from the sea called the Erythræan,³ of which I will here set down the dimensions. Starting from its innermost recess, and using a row-boat, you take forty days to reach the open main, while you may cross the gulf at its widest part in the space of half a day. In this sea there is an ebb and flow of the tide every day.⁴ My opinion is, that Egypt was formerly very much such a gulf as this—one gulf penetrated from the sea that washes Egypt on the north,⁵ and extended itself towards Ethiopia; another entered from the southern ocean, and stretched towards Syria; the two gulfs ran into the land so as almost to meet each other, and left between them only a very narrow tract of country. Now if the Nile should choose to divert his waters from their present bed into this Arabian gulf, what is there to hinder it from being filled up by the stream within, at the utmost, twenty thousand years? For my part, I think it would be filled in half the time. How then should not a gulf, even of much greater size, have been filled up in the ages that passed before I was born, by a river that is at once so large and so given to working changes?

12. Thus I give credit to those from whom I received this account of Egypt, and am myself, moreover, strongly of the same opinion, since I remarked that the country projects into the sea further than the neighbouring shores, and I observed that there were shells upon the hills, and that salt exuded from the soil to such an extent as even to injure the pyramids; and

¹ These islands, which still bear the same name among the educated Greeks, consist of two clusters, linked together by the barren and rugged *Petalá*.

² That the Acheloüs in ancient times formed fresh land at its mouth with very great rapidity is certain, from the testimony of various writers besides Herodotus.

³ The Greeks generally did not give the name Erythræan, or Red Sea, to the Arabian Gulf, but to all that part of the Indian Ocean reaching from the Persian Gulf to India (as in ii. 102; and iv. 39). It was also applied to the Persian Gulf (i. 1, 180, 189), and Herodotus sometimes gives it to the Arabian Gulf, and even the western branch between Mount Sinai and Egypt (ii. 158).

⁴ Herodotus is perfectly right in speaking of the tide in this gulf. At Suez it is from 5 to 6 feet, but much less to the southward.

⁵ The Mediterranean, called by the Arabs "the White Sea" as well as "the North Sea."

I noticed also that there is but a single hill in all Egypt where sand is found,¹ namely, the hill above Memphis; and further, I found the country to bear no resemblance either to its borderland Arabia, or to Libya²—nay, nor even to Syria, which forms the seaboard of Arabia; but whereas the soil of Libya is, we know, sandy and of a reddish hue, and that of Arabia and Syria inclines to stone and clay, Egypt has a soil that is black and crumbly, as being alluvial and formed of the deposits brought down by the river from Ethiopia.

13. One fact which I learnt of the priests is to me a strong evidence of the origin of the country. They said that when Mœris was king, the Nile overflowed all Egypt below Memphis, as soon as it rose so little as eight cubits. Now Mœris had not been dead 900 years at the time when I heard this of the priests;³ yet at the present day, unless the river rise sixteen, or, at the very least, fifteen cubits, it does not overflow the lands. It seems to me, therefore, that if the land goes on rising and growing at this rate, the Egyptians who dwell below lake Mœris, in the Delta (as it is called) and elsewhere, will one day, by the stoppage of the inundations, suffer permanently the fate which they told me they expected would some time or other befall the Greeks. On hearing that the whole land of Greece is watered by rain from heaven, and not, like their own, inundated by rivers, they observed—"Some day the Greeks will be disappointed of their grand hope, and then they will be wretchedly hungry;" which was as much as to say, "If God shall some day see fit not to grant the Greeks rain, but shall afflict them with a long drought, the Greeks will be swept away by a famine,

¹ The only mountain where sand abounds is certainly the African range.

² It is perfectly true that neither in soil nor climate is Egypt like any other country. The soil is, as Herodotus says, "black and crumbly." The deposit of the Nile, when left on a rock and dried by the sun, resembles pottery in its appearance and by its fracture, from the silica it contains; but as long as it retains its moisture it has the appearance of clay, from its slimy and tenacious quality. It varies according to circumstances, sometimes being mixed with sand, but it is generally of a black colour, and Egypt is said to have been called hence "black," from the prevailing character of its soil.

³ This would make the date of Mœris about 1355 B.C.; but it neither agrees with the age of Amun-m'he III. of the Labyrinth, nor of Thothmes III. The Mœris, however, *from whom these dates are calculated*, appears to have been Menophres, whose era was so remarkable, and was fixed as the Sothic period, B.C. 1322, which happened about 900 years before Herodotus' visit, only falling short of that sum by 33 years. It is reasonable to suppose that by Mœris he would refer to that king who was so remarkable for his attention to the levels of the Nile, shown by his making the lake called after him.

since they have nothing to rely on but rain from Jove, and have no other resource for water."

14. And certes, in thus speaking of the Greeks the Egyptians say nothing but what is true. But now let me tell the Egyptians how the case stands with themselves. If, as I said before, the country below Memphis, which is the land that is always rising, continues to increase in height at the rate at which it has risen in times gone by, how will it be possible for the inhabitants of that region to avoid hunger, when they will certainly have no rain,¹ and the river will not be able to overflow their corn-lands? At present, it must be confessed, they obtain the fruits of the field with less trouble than any other people in the world, the rest of the Egyptians included, since they have no need to break up the ground with the plough, nor to use the hoe, nor to do any of the work which the rest of mankind find necessary if they are to get a crop; but the husbandman waits till the river has of its own accord spread itself over the fields and withdrawn again to its bed, and then sows his plot of ground, and after sowing turns his swine into it—the swine tread in the corn²—after which he has only to await the harvest. The swine serve him also to thrash the grain,³ which is then carried to the garner.

15. If then we choose to adopt the views of the Ionians concerning Egypt, we must come to the conclusion that the Egyptians had formerly no country at all. For the Ionians say that nothing is really Egypt⁴ but the Delta, which extends along shore from the Watch-tower of Perseus,⁵ as it is called, to the Pelusiatic Salt-pans, a distance of forty schœnes, and

¹ In Upper Egypt showers only occur about five or six times in the year, but every fifteen or twenty years heavy rain falls there, which will account for the deep ravines cut in the valleys of the Theban hills, about the Tombs of the Kings; in Lower Egypt rain is more frequent; and in Alexandria it is as abundant in winter as in the south of Europe.

² Plutarch, Ælian, and Pliny mention this custom of treading in the grain "with pigs" in Egypt; but no instance occurs of it in the tombs, though goats are sometimes so represented in the paintings. It is indeed more probable that pigs were turned in upon the land to eat up the weeds and roots.

³ The paintings show that oxen were commonly used to tread out the grain from the ear at harvest-time, and occasionally, though rarely, asses were so employed; but pigs not being sufficiently heavy for the purpose, are not likely to have been substituted for oxen.

⁴ There is no appearance of the name "Egypt" on the ancient monuments, where the country is called "Chemi." Egypt is said to have been called originally Aetia, and the Nile Aetos and Siris. Upper Egypt, or the Thebaid, has even been confounded with, and called, Æthiopia.

⁵ This tower stood to the W. of the Canopic mouth.

stretches inland as far as the city of Cercasôrus, where the Nile divides into the two streams which reach the sea at Pelusium and Canôbus respectively. The rest of what is accounted Egypt belongs, they say, either to Arabia or Libya. But the Delta, as the Egyptians affirm, and as I myself am persuaded, is formed of the deposits of the river, and has only recently, if I may use the expression, come to light. If, then, they had formerly no territory at all, how came they to be so extravagant as to fancy themselves the most ancient race in the world? Surely there was no need of their making the experiment with the children to see what language they would first speak. But in truth I do not believe that the Egyptians came into being at the same time with the Delta, as the Ionians call it; I think they have always existed ever since the human race began; as the land went on increasing, part of the population came down into the new country, part remained in their old settlements. In ancient times the Thebaïs bore the name of Egypt, a district of which the entire circumference is but 6120 furlongs.

16. If, then, my judgment on these matters be right, the Ionians are mistaken in what they say of Egypt. If, on the contrary, it is they who are right, then I undertake to show that neither the Ionians nor any of the other Greeks know how to count. For they all say that the earth is divided into three parts, Europe, Asia, and Libya, whereas they ought to add a fourth part, the Delta of Egypt, since they do not include it either in Asia or Libya.¹ For is it not their theory that the Nile separates Asia from Libya? As the Nile, therefore, splits in two at the apex of the Delta, the Delta itself must be a separate country, not contained in either Asia or Libya.

17. Here I take my leave of the opinions of the Ionians, and proceed to deliver my own sentiments on these subjects. I consider Egypt to be the whole country inhabited by the Egyptians, just as Cilicia is the tract occupied by the Cilicians, and Assyria that possessed by the Assyrians. And I regard the only proper boundary-line between Libya and Asia to be that which is marked out by the Egyptian frontier. For if we take the boundary-line commonly received by the Greeks,² we must regard Egypt as divided, along its whole length from Elephantiné and the Cataracts to Cercasôrus, into two parts, each

¹ Though Egypt really belongs to the continent of Africa, the inhabitants were certainly of Asiatic origin.

² That is, the course of the Nile.

belonging to a different portion of the world, one to Asia, the other to Libya; since the Nile divides Egypt in two from the Cataracts to the sea, running as far as the city of Cercasôrus in a single stream, but at that point separating into three branches, whereof the one which bends eastward is called the Pelusiac mouth, and that which slants to the west, the Canobic. Meanwhile the straight course of the stream, which comes down from the upper country and meets the apex of the Delta, continues on, dividing the Delta down the middle, and empties itself into the sea by a mouth, which is as celebrated, and carries as large a body of water, as most of the others, the mouth called the Sebennytic. Besides these there are two other mouths which run out of the Sebennytic called respectively the Saitic and the Mendesian. The Bolbitine mouth, and the Bucolic, are not natural branches, but channels made by excavation.

18. My judgment as to the extent of Egypt is confirmed by an oracle delivered at the shrine of Ammon, of which I had no knowledge at all until after I had formed my opinion. It happened that the people of the cities Marea¹ and Apis, who live in the part of Egypt that borders on Libya, took a dislike to the religious usages of the country concerning sacrificial animals, and wished no longer to be restricted from eating the flesh of cows.² So, as they believed themselves to be Libyans and not Egyptians, they sent to the shrine to say that, having nothing in common with the Egyptians, neither inhabiting the Delta nor using the Egyptian tongue, they claimed to be allowed to eat whatever they pleased. Their request, however, was refused by the god, who declared in reply that Egypt was the entire tract of country which the Nile overspreads and irrigates, and the Egyptians were the people who lived below Elephantiné,³ and drank the waters of that river.

19. So said the oracle. Now the Nile, when it overflows, floods not only the Delta, but also the tracts of country on both

¹ The town of Marea stood near the lake to which it gave the name Mareotis. It was celebrated for the wine produced in its vicinity.

² Though oxen were lawful food to the Egyptians, cows and heifers were forbidden to be killed, either for the altar or the table, being consecrated (not as Herodotus states, ch. 41, to Isis, but as Strabo says) to Athor, who was represented under the form of a spotted cow, and to whose temple at Atarbechis, "the city of Athor," as Herodotus afterwards shows, the bodies of those that died were carried (ch. 41).

³ Syene and Elephantiné were the real frontier of Egypt on the S.; Egypt extending "from the tower (Migdol) of Syene" to the sea (Ezek. xxix. 10).

sides the stream which are thought to belong to Libya and Arabia, in some places reaching to the extent of two days' journey from its banks, in some even exceeding that distance, but in others falling short of it.

Concerning the nature of the river, I was not able to gain any information either from the priests or from others. I was particularly anxious to learn from them why the Nile, at the commencement of the summer solstice, begins to rise,¹ and continues to increase for a hundred days—and why, as soon as that number is past, it forthwith retires and contracts its stream, continuing low during the whole of the winter until the summer solstice comes round again. On none of these points could I obtain any explanation from the inhabitants,² though I made every inquiry, wishing to know what was commonly reported—they could neither tell me what special virtue the Nile has which makes it so opposite in its nature to all other streams, nor why, unlike every other river, it gives forth no breezes³ from its surface.

20. Some of the Greeks, however, wishing to get a reputation for cleverness, have offered explanations of the phenomena of the river, for which they have accounted in three different ways. Two of these I do not think it worth while to speak of, further than simply to mention what they are. One pretends that the Etesian winds⁴ cause the rise of the river by preventing the Nile-water from running off into the sea. But in the first place it has often happened, when the Etesian winds did not blow, that the Nile has risen according to its usual wont; and further, if the Etesian winds produced the effect, the other rivers which flow in a direction opposite to those winds ought to present the same phenomena as the Nile, and the more so as they are all

¹ Herodotus was surprised that the Nile should rise in the summer solstice and become low in winter. In the latitude of Memphis it begins to rise at the end of June, about the 10th of August it attains to the height requisite for cutting the canals and admitting it into the interior of the plain; and it is generally at its highest about the end of September. This makes from 92 to 100 days, as Herodotus states.

² The cause of the inundation is the water that falls during the rainy season in Abyssinia; and the range of the tropical rains extends even as far N. as latitude 17° 43'.

³ If this signifies that breezes are not generated by, and do not rise from, the Nile, it is true; but not if it means that a current of air does not blow up the valley.

⁴ The annual N.W. winds blow from the Mediterranean during the inundation; but they are not the *cause* of the rise of the Nile, though they help in a small degree to impede its course northwards. For the navigation of the river they are invaluable.

smaller streams, and have a weaker current. But these rivers, of which there are many both in Syria¹ and Libya, are entirely unlike the Nile in this respect.

21. The second opinion is even more unscientific than the one just mentioned, and also, if I may so say, more marvellous. It is that the Nile acts so strangely, because it flows from the ocean, and that the ocean flows all round the earth.²

22. The third explanation, which is very much more plausible than either of the others, is positively the furthest from the truth; for there is really nothing in what it says, any more than in the other theories. It is, that the inundation of the Nile is caused by the melting of snows.³ Now, as the Nile flows out of Libya,⁴ through Ethiopia, into Egypt, how is it possible that it can be formed of melted snow, running, as it does, from the hottest regions of the world into cooler countries? Many are the proofs whereby any one capable of reasoning on the subject may be convinced that it is most unlikely this should be the case. The first and strongest argument is furnished by the winds, which always blow hot from these regions. The second is, that rain and frost are unknown there.⁵ Now whenever snow falls, it must of necessity rain within five days;⁶ so that, if there were snow, there must be rain also in those parts. Thirdly, it is certain that the natives of the country are black with the heat, that the kites and the swallows remain there the whole year, and that the cranes, when they fly from the rigours of a Scythian winter, flock thither to pass the cold season.⁷ If

¹ It is possible to justify this statement, which at first sight seems untrue, by considering that the direction of the Etesian winds was *north-westerly* rather than north. This was natural, as they are caused by the rush of the air from the Mediterranean and Ægean, to fill up the vacuum caused by the rarefaction of the atmosphere over the desert lands in the neighbourhood of the sea.

² That the Nile flowed from the ocean, and that the ocean flowed all round the earth, were certainly opinions of Hecataeus. It is probable, therefore, that his account of the inundation is here intended.

³ This was the opinion of Anaxagoras, as well as of his pupil Euripides and others. Herodotus is wrong in supposing snow could not be found on mountains in the hot climate of Africa; perpetual snow is not confined to certain latitudes; and ancient and modern discoveries prove that it is found in the ranges S. of Abyssinia.

⁴ That is, from Central Africa.

⁵ Herodotus was not aware of the rainy season in Sennár and the S.S.W. of Abyssinia, nor did he know of the Abyssinian snow.

⁶ I have found nothing in any writer, ancient or modern, to confirm, or so much as to explain, this assertion. In some parts of England there is a saying, that "three days of white frost are sure to bring rain."

⁷ Cranes and other wading birds are found in the winter, in Upper Egypt, but far more in Ethiopia. Kites remain all the winter, and swallows also,

then, in the country whence the Nile has its source, or in that through which it flows, there fell ever so little snow, it is absolutely impossible that any of these circumstances could take place.

23. As for the writer who attributes the phenomenon to the ocean,¹ his account is involved in such obscurity, that it is impossible to disprove it by argument. For my part I know of no river called Ocean, and I think that Homer, or one of the earlier poets, invented the name, and introduced it into his poetry.

24. Perhaps, after censuring all the opinions that have been put forward on this obscure subject, one ought to propose some theory of one's own. I will therefore proceed to explain what I think to be the reason of the Nile's swelling in the summer time. During the winter, the sun is driven out of his usual course by the storms, and removes to the upper parts of Libya. This is the whole secret in the fewest possible words; for it stands to reason that the country to which the Sun-god approaches the nearest, and which he passes most directly over, will be scantest of water, and that there the streams which feed the rivers will shrink the most.

25. To explain, however, more at length, the case is this. The sun, in his passage across the upper parts of Libya, affects them in the following way. As the air in those regions is constantly clear, and the country warm through the absence of cold winds, the sun in his passage across them acts upon them exactly as he is wont to act elsewhere in summer, when his path is in the middle of heaven—that is, he attracts the water. After attracting it, he again repels it into the upper regions, where the winds lay hold of it, scatter it, and reduce it to a vapour, whence it naturally enough comes to pass that the winds which blow from this quarter—the south and south-west—are of all winds the most rainy. And my own opinion is that the sun does not get rid of all the water which he draws year by year from the Nile, but retains some about him. When the winter begins to soften, the sun goes back again to his old place in the middle of the heaven, and proceeds to attract water equally from all countries. Till then the other rivers run big, from the quantity of rain-water which they bring down from countries though in small numbers, even at Thebes. The swallow was always the harbinger of spring, as in Greece and the rest of Europe.

¹ The person to whom Herodotus alludes is Hecataeus. He mentions it also as an opinion of the Greeks of Pontus, that the ocean flowed round the whole earth (B. iv. ch. 8).

where so much moisture falls that all the land is cut into gullies; but in summer, when the showers fail, and the sun attracts their water, they become low. The Nile, on the contrary, not deriving any of its bulk from rains, and being in winter subject to the attraction of the sun, naturally runs at that season, unlike all other streams, with a less burthen of water than in the summer time. For in summer it is exposed to attraction equally with all other rivers, but in winter it suffers alone. The sun, therefore, I regard as the sole cause of the phenomenon.

26. It is the sun also, in my opinion, which, by heating the space through which it passes, makes the air in Egypt so dry. There is thus perpetual summer in the upper parts of Libya. Were the position of the heavenly regions reversed, so that the place where now the north wind and the winter have their dwelling became the station of the south wind and of the noon-day, while, on the other hand, the station of the south wind became that of the north, the consequence would be that the sun, driven from the mid-heaven by the winter and the northern gales, would betake himself to the upper parts of Europe, as he now does to those of Libya, and then I believe his passage across Europe would affect the Ister exactly as the Nile is affected at the present day.

27. And with respect to the fact that no breeze blows from the Nile, I am of opinion that no wind is likely to arise in very hot countries, for breezes love to blow from some cold quarter.

28. Let us leave these things, however, to their natural course, to continue as they are and have been from the beginning. With regard to the *sources* of the Nile,¹ I have found no one among all those with whom I have conversed, whether Egyptians, Libyans, or Greeks,² who professed to have any knowledge, except a single person. He was the scribe³ who kept the

¹ The sources of the great eastern branch of the Nile have long been discovered. They were first visited by the Portuguese Jesuit, Father Lobo, and afterwards by Bruce. Herodotus affirms that of all the persons he had consulted, none pretended to give him any information about the sources, except a scribe of the sacred treasury of Minerva at Saïs, who said it rose from a certain abyss beneath two pointed hills between Syene and Elephantiné. This is an important passage in his narrative, as it involves the question of his having visited the Thebaid.

² This was one of the great problems of antiquity, as of later times.

³ The scribes had different offices and grades. The sacred scribes held a high post in the priesthood; and the royal scribes were the king's sons and military men of rank. There were also ordinary scribes or notaries, who were conveyancers, wrote letters on business, settled accounts, and performed different offices in the market.

register of the sacred treasures of Minerva in the city of Saïs, and he did not seem to me to be in earnest when he said that he knew them perfectly well. His story was as follows:—"Between Syêné, a city of the Thebaïs, and Elephantiné, there are" (he said) "two hills with sharp conical tops; the name of the one is Crophî, of the other, Mophî. Midway between them are the fountains of the Nile, fountains which it is impossible to fathom. Half the water runs northward into Egypt, half to the south towards Ethiôpia." The fountains were known to be unfathomable, he declared, because Psammetichus, an Egyptian king, had made trial of them. He had caused a rope to be made, many thousand fathoms in length, and had sounded the fountain with it, but could find no bottom. By this the scribe gave me to understand, if there was any truth at all in what he said, that in this fountain there are certain strong eddies, and a regurgitation, owing to the force wherewith the water dashes against the mountains, and hence a sounding-line cannot be got to reach the bottom of the spring.

29. No other information on this head could I obtain from any quarter. All that I succeeded in learning further of the more distant portions of the Nile, by ascending myself as high as Elephantiné, and making inquiries concerning the parts beyond, was the following:—As one advances beyond Elephantiné, the land rises.¹ Hence it is necessary in this part of the river to attach a rope to the boat on each side, as men harness an ox, and so proceed on the journey. If the rope snaps, the vessel is borne away down stream by the force of the current. The navigation continues the same for four days, the river winding greatly, like the Mæander,² and the distance traversed amounting to twelve schœnes. Here you come upon a smooth and level plain, where the Nile flows in two branches, round an island called Tachompso.³ The country above Elephantiné is inhabited by the Ethiopians, who possess one-half of this island, the Egyptians occupying the other. Above the island there is

¹ This fact should have convinced Herodotus of the improbability of the story of the river flowing southwards into Ethiôpia. That boats are obliged to be dragged by ropes in order to pass the rapids is true; and in performing this arduous duty great skill and agility are required.

² The windings of the Mæander are perhaps at the present day still more remarkable than they were anciently, owing to the growth of the alluvial plain through which it flows.

³ The distances given by Herodotus are 4 days through the district of Dodecaschœnus to Tachompso Isle, then 40 days by land, then 12 days by boat to Meroë; altogether 56 days.

a great lake, the shores of which are inhabited by Ethiopian nomads; after passing it, you come again to the stream of the Nile, which runs into the lake. Here you land, and travel for forty days along the banks of the river, since it is impossible to proceed further in a boat on account of the sharp peaks which jut out from the water, and the sunken rocks which abound in that part of the stream. When you have passed this portion of the river in the space of forty days, you go on board another boat and proceed by water for twelve days more, at the end of which time you reach a great city called Meroë, which is said to be the capital of the other Ethiopians. The only gods worshipped by the inhabitants are Jupiter and Bacchus,¹ to whom great honours are paid. There is an oracle of Jupiter in the city, which directs the warlike expeditions of the Ethiopians; when it commands they go to war,² and in whatever direction it bids them march, thither straightway they carry their arms.

30. On leaving this city, and again mounting the stream, in the same space of time which it took you to reach the capital from Elephantiné, you come to the Deserters,³ who bear the name of Asmach. This word, translated into our language, means "the men who stand on the left hand of the king."⁴ These Deserters are Egyptians of the warrior caste, who, to the number of two hundred and forty thousand, went over to the Ethiopians in the reign of king Psammetichus. The cause of

¹ Amun and Osiris answered to Jupiter and Bacchus; and both the Amun of Thebes and the ram-headed Nou (or Kneph) were worshipped in Ethiopia. But it is this last deity to whom Herodotus alludes. [See Prof. W. Flinders Petrie, *Religion and Conscience in Ancient Egypt*, chap. iv. "The Egyptian Mythology."—E. H. B.]

² The influence of the priests at Meroë, through the belief that they spoke the commands of the Deity, is more fully shown by Strabo and Diodorus, who say it was their custom to send to the king, when it pleased them, and order him to put an end to himself, in obedience to the will of the oracle imparted to them; and to such a degree had they contrived to enslave the understanding of those princes by superstitious fears, that they were obeyed without opposition. At length a king, called Ergamenes, a contemporary of Ptolemy Philadelphus, dared to disobey their orders, and having entered "the golden chapel" with his soldiers, caused them to be put to death in his stead, and abolished the custom.

³ The descendants of the 240,000 deserters from Psammetichus lived, according to Herodotus, 4 months' journey above Elephantiné (ch. 31), from which Meroë stood half-way.

⁴ Diodorus says that the reason of the Egyptian troops deserting from Psammetichus was his having placed them in the *left* wing, while the right was given to the strangers in his army, which is not only more probable than the reason assigned by Herodotus, but is strongly confirmed by the discovery of an inscription in Nubia, written apparently by the Greeks who accompanied Psammetichus when in pursuit of the deserters.

their desertion was the following:—Three garrisons were maintained in Egypt at that time,¹ one in the city of Elephantiné against the Ethiopians, another in the Pelusiac Daphnæ, against the Syrians and Arabians, and a third, against the Libyans, in Marea. (The very same posts are to this day occupied by the Persians, whose forces are in garrison both in Daphnæ and in Elephantiné.) Now it happened, that on one occasion the garrisons were not relieved during the space of three years; the soldiers, therefore, at the end of that time, consulted together, and having determined by common consent to revolt, marched away towards Ethiopia. Psammetichus, informed of the movement, set out in pursuit, and coming up with them, besought them with many words not to desert the gods of their country, nor abandon their wives and children. “Nay, but,” said one of the deserters with an unseemly gesture, “wherever we go, we are sure enough of finding wives and children.” Arrived in Ethiopia, they placed themselves at the disposal of the king. In return, he made them a present of a tract of land which belonged to certain Ethiopians with whom he was at feud, bidding them expel the inhabitants and take possession of their territory. From the time that this settlement was formed, their acquaintance with Egyptian manners has tended to civilise the Ethiopians.²

31. Thus the course of the Nile is known, not only throughout Egypt, but to the extent of four months’ journey either by land or water above the Egyptian boundary; for on calculation it will be found that it takes that length of time to travel from Elephantiné to the country of the Deserters. There the direction of the river is from west to east.³ Beyond, no one has any certain knowledge of its course, since the country is uninhabited by reason of the excessive heat.

32. I did hear, indeed, what I will now relate, from certain natives of Cyréné. Once upon a time, they said, they were on a visit to the oracular shrine of Ammon,⁴ when it chanced that in the course of conversation with Etearchus, the Ammonian

¹ It was always the custom of the Egyptians to have a garrison stationed, as Herodotus states, on the frontier.

² This would be a strong argument, if required, against the notion of civilisation having come from the Ethiopians to Egypt; but the monuments prove beyond all question that the Ethiopians borrowed from Egypt their religion and their habits of civilisation.

³ This only applies to the white river, or western branch of the Nile.

⁴ This was in the modern Oasis of See-wah (Siwah), where remains of the temple are still seen. The oracle long continued in great repute.

king, the talk fell upon the Nile, how that its sources were unknown to all men. Etearchus upon this mentioned that some Nasamonians had once come to his court, and when asked if they could give any information concerning the uninhabited parts of Libya, had told the following tale. (The Nasamonians are a Libyan race who occupy the Syrtis, and a tract of no great size towards the east.¹) They said there had grown up among them some wild young men, the sons of certain chiefs, who, when they came to man's estate, indulged in all manner of extravagancies, and among other things drew lots for five of their number to go and explore the desert parts of Libya, and try if they could not penetrate further than any had done previously. The coast of Libya along the sea which washes it to the north, throughout its entire length from Egypt to Cape Soloeis,² which is its furthest point, is inhabited by Libyans of many distinct tribes who possess the whole tract except certain portions which belong to the Phœnicians and the Greeks.³ Above the coast-line and the country inhabited by the maritime tribes, Libya is full of wild beasts; while beyond the wild beast region there is a tract which is wholly sand, very scant of water, and utterly and entirely a desert. The young men therefore, despatched on this errand by their comrades with a plentiful supply of water and provisions, travelled at first through the inhabited region, passing which they came to the wild beast tract, whence they finally entered upon the desert, which they proceeded to cross in a direction from east to west. After journeying for many days over a wide extent of sand, they came at last to a plain where they observed trees growing; approaching them, and seeing fruit on them, they proceeded to gather it. While they were thus engaged, there came upon them some dwarfish men,⁴ under the middle height, who seized them and carried them off. The Nasamonians could not understand a word of their language, nor had they any acquaintance with the language of the Nasamonians. They were led across extensive marshes, and finally came to a town, where all the men were of the height of their conductors, and black-complexioned.

¹ Vide infra, iv. 172, 173.

² Cape *Spartel*, near Tangier.

³ That is, the Cyrenaica, and the possessions of the Phœnicians and Carthaginians, or more properly the Pœni, on the N. and W. coasts.

⁴ Men of diminutive size really exist in Africa, but the Nasamones probably only knew of some by report. The pigmies are mentioned by Homer (Il. iii. 6) and others, and often represented on Greek vases.

A great river flowed by the town,¹ running from west to east, and containing crocodiles.

33. Here let me dismiss Etearchus the Ammonian, and his story, only adding that (according to the Cyrenæans) he declared that the Nasamonians got safe back to their country, and that the men whose city they had reached were a nation of sorcerers. With respect to the river which ran by their town, Etearchus conjectured it to be the Nile; and reason favours that view. For the Nile certainly flows out of Libya, dividing it down the middle, and as I conceive, judging the unknown from the known, rises at the same distance from its mouth as the Ister.² This latter river has its source in the country of the Celts near the city Pyréné, and runs through the middle of Europe, dividing it into two portions. The Celts live beyond the pillars of Hercules, and border on the Cynesians,³ who dwell at the extreme west of Europe. Thus the Ister flows through the whole of Europe before it finally empties itself into the Euxine at Istria,⁴ one of the colonies of the Milesians.

34. Now as this river flows through regions that are inhabited, its course is perfectly well known; but of the sources of the Nile no one can give any account, since Libya, the country through which it passes, is desert and without inhabitants. As far as it was possible to get information by inquiry, I have given a description of the stream. It enters Egypt from the parts beyond. Egypt lies almost exactly opposite the mountainous portion of Cilicia,⁵ whence a lightly-equipped traveller may reach Sinôpé on the Euxine in five days by the direct route.⁶ Sinôpé lies opposite the place where the Ister falls into the sea.⁷

¹ It seems not improbable that we have here a mention of the river Niger, and of the ancient representative of the modern city of *Timbuctoo*.

² Herodotus does not intend any exact correspondency between the Nile and the Danube. He is only speaking of the comparative *length* of the two streams, and conjectures that they are equal in this respect.

³ The Cynesians are mentioned again in iv. 49 as Cynêtes. They are a nation of whom nothing is known but their abode from very ancient times at the extreme S.W. of Europe.

⁴ If the Danube in the time of Herodotus entered the Euxine at Istria, it must have changed its course very greatly since he wrote.

⁵ Cilicia was divided into two portions, the eastern, or "*Cilicia campestris*," and the western, or "*Cilicia aspera*." Egypt does not really lie "opposite"—that is, in the same longitude with—the latter region. It rather faces Pamphylia, but Herodotus gives all Africa, as far as the Lesser Syrtis, too easterly a position.

⁶ *Supra*, i. 72, sub fin.

⁷ This of course is neither true, nor near the truth; and it is difficult to make out in what sense Herodotus meant to assert it. Perhaps he attached no very distinct geographical meaning to the word "opposite."

My opinion therefore is that the Nile, as it traverses the whole of Libya, is of equal length with the Ister. And here I take my leave of this subject.

35. Concerning Egypt itself I shall extend my remarks to a great length, because there is no country that possesses so many wonders,¹ nor any that has such a number of works which defy description. Not only is the climate different from that of the rest of the world, and the rivers unlike any other rivers, but the people also, in most of their manners and customs, exactly reverse the common practice of mankind. The women attend the markets² and trade, while the men sit at home at the loom;³ and here, while the rest of the world works the woof up the warp, the Egyptians work it down; the women likewise carry burthens upon their shoulders, while the men carry them upon their heads. They eat their food out of doors in the streets,⁴ but retire for private purposes to their houses, giving as a reason that what is unseemly, but necessary, ought to be done in secret, but what has nothing unseemly about it, should be done openly. A woman cannot serve the priestly office,⁵

¹ By this statement Herodotus prepares his readers for what he is about to relate; but the desire to tell of the wonders in which it differed from all other countries led Herodotus to indulge in his love of antithesis, so that in some cases he confines to one sex what was done by both (a singular instance being noted down by him as an invariable custom), and in others he has indulged in the marvellous at a sacrifice of truth. If, however, Herodotus had told us that the Egyptian women enjoyed greater liberty, confidence, and consideration than under the *hareem* system of the Greeks and Persians (Book i. ch. 136), he would have been fully justified, for the treatment of women in Egypt was far better than in Greece. In many cases where Herodotus tells improbable tales, they are on the authority of others, or mere hearsay reports, for which he at once declares himself not responsible, and he justly pleads that his history was not only a relation of facts, but the result of an "*ἱστορία*," or "inquiry," in which all he heard was inserted.

² The market-place was originally outside the walls, generally in an open space, beneath what was afterwards the citadel or the acropolis.

³ The ancients generally seem to have believed the charge of effeminacy brought by Herodotus against the Egyptians.

⁴ That they sometimes ate in the street is not to be doubted; but this was only the poorer class, as in other parts of ancient and modern Europe, and could not be mentioned in contradistinction to a Greek custom. The Egyptians generally dined at a small round table, having one leg (similar to the monopodium), at which one or more persons sat, and they ate with their fingers like the Greeks and the modern Arabs. Several dishes were placed upon the table, and before eating it was their custom to say grace.

⁵ Though men held the priesthood in Egypt, as in other countries, women were not excluded from certain important duties in the temples, as Herodotus also shows (chs. 54, 56); the queens made offerings with the kings; and the monuments, as well as Diodorus, show that an order of women, chosen from the principal families, were employed in the service of the gods.

either for god or goddess, but men are priests to both; sons need not support their parents unless they choose, but daughters must, whether they choose or no.¹

36. In other countries the priests have long hair, in Egypt their heads are shaven;² elsewhere it is customary, in mourning, for near relations to cut their hair close: the Egyptians, who wear no hair at any other time, when they lose a relative, let their beards and the hair of their heads grow long. All other men pass their lives separate from animals, the Egyptians have animals always living with them;³ others make barley and wheat their food; it is a disgrace to do so in Egypt,⁴ where the grain they live on is spelt, which some call *zea*. Dough they knead with their feet; but they mix mud, and even take up dirt, with their hands. They are the only people in the world—they at least, and such as have learnt the practice from them⁵—who use circumcision. Their men wear two garments apiece, their women but one.⁶ They put on the rings and fasten the ropes to sails inside;⁷ others put them outside. When they write⁸ or calculate, instead of going, like the Greeks, from left

¹ Of the daughters being forced to support their parents instead of the sons, it is difficult to decide; but the improbability of the custom is glaring. It is the son on whom the duty fell of providing for the services in honour of his deceased parent; and the law of debt mentioned by Herodotus (in ch. 136) contradicts his assertion here.

² The custom of shaving the head as well as beard was not confined to the priests in Egypt, it was general among all classes; and all the men wore wigs or caps fitting close to their heads, except some of the poorest class. The custom of allowing the hair to grow in mourning was not confined to Egypt.

³ Their living with animals not only contradicts a previous assertion of their eating in the streets, but is contrary to fact.

⁴ Their considering it a "*disgrace*" to live on wheat and barley is equally extravagant.

⁵ Vide *infra*, ch. 104.

⁶ The men having two dresses, and the women one, gives an erroneous impression. The usual dress of men was a long upper robe and a short kilt beneath it, the former being laid aside when at work; while women had only the long robe. When an extra upper garment was worn over these the men had three, the women two; so that, instead of limiting the latter to one, he should have given to men always one more garment than the women.

⁷ The ancient custom of fastening the braces and sheets of the sails to rings within the gunwale fully agrees with that still adopted in the Nile boats.

⁸ The Egyptians wrote from right to left in hieratic and demotic (or enchorial), which are the two modes of *writing* here mentioned. The Greeks also in old times wrote from right to left, like the Phoenicians, from whom they borrowed their alphabet. This seems the natural mode of writing; for though we have always been accustomed to write from left to right, we invariably use our pencil, in shading a drawing, from right to left, in spite of all our previous habit.

to right, they move their hand from right to left; and they insist, notwithstanding, that it is they who go to the right, and the Greeks who go to the left. They have two quite different kinds of writing, one of which is called sacred, the other common.

37. They are religious to excess, far beyond any other race of men,¹ and use the following ceremonies:—They drink out of brazen cups,² which they scour every day: there is no exception to this practice. They wear linen garments, which they are specially careful to have always fresh washed.³ They practise circumcision for the sake of cleanliness, considering it better to be cleanly than comely. The priests shave their whole body every other day, that no lice or other impure thing may adhere to them when they are engaged in the service of the gods. Their dress is entirely of linen,⁴ and their shoes of the papyrus plant: ⁵ it is not lawful for them to wear either dress or shoes of any other material. They bathe twice every day in cold water, and twice each night; besides which they observe, so to speak, thousands of ceremonies. They enjoy, however, not a few advantages.⁶ They consume none of their own property, and are

¹ The extreme religious views of the Egyptians became at length a gross superstition, and were naturally a subject for ridicule and contempt.

² This, he says, is the universal custom, without exception; but we not only know that Joseph had a silver drinking-cup (Gen. xlv. 2, 5), but the sculptures show the wealthy Egyptians used glass, porcelain, and gold, sometimes inlaid with a coloured composition resembling enamel, or with precious stones. That persons who could not afford cups of more costly materials should have been contented with those of bronze is very probable.

³ Their attention to cleanliness was very remarkable, as is shown by their shaving the head and beard, and removing the hair from the whole body, by their frequent ablutions, and by the strict rules instituted to ensure it.

⁴ The dress of the priests consisted, as Herodotus states, of linen (ch. 81); but he does not say they were confined (as some have supposed) to a single robe; and whether walking abroad, or officiating in the temple, they were permitted to have more than one garment. The high priest styled *Sem* always wore a leopard-skin placed over the linen dress as his costume of office. The fine texture of the Egyptian linen is fully proved by its transparency, as represented in the paintings, and by the statements of ancient writers, sacred (Gen. xli. 42; and 2 Chron. i. 16) as well as profane.

⁵ Their sandals were made of the papyrus, an inferior quality being of matted palm-leaves; and they either slept on a simple skin stretched on the ground, or on a wicker bed, made of palm-branches.

⁶ The greatest of these was the paramount influence they exercised over the spiritual, and consequently over the temporal, concerns of the whole community, which was secured to them through their superior knowledge, by the dependence of all classes on them for the instruction they chose to impart, and by their exclusive right of possessing all the secrets of religion which were thought to place them far above the rest of mankind. Nor did their power over an individual cease with his life; it would even reach him after death; and their veto could prevent his being buried in his tomb, and consign his name to lasting infamy.

at no expense for anything;¹ but every day bread is baked for them of the sacred corn, and a plentiful supply of beef and of goose's flesh is assigned to each, and also a portion of wine made from the grape.² Fish they are not allowed to eat;³ and beans, —which none of the Egyptians ever sow, or eat, if they come up of their own accord, either raw or boiled⁴—the priests will not even endure to look on, since they consider it an unclean kind of pulse. Instead of a single priest, each god has the attendance of a college, at the head of which is a chief priest;⁵ when one of these dies, his son is appointed in his room.

38. Male kine are reckoned to belong to Epaphus,⁶ and are therefore tested in the following manner:—One of the priests appointed for the purpose searches to see if there is a single black hair on the whole body, since in that case the beast is unclean. He examines him all over, standing on his legs, and again laid upon his back; after which he takes the tongue out of his mouth, to see if it be clean in respect of the prescribed marks (what they are I will mention elsewhere⁷); he also inspects the hairs of the tail, to observe if they grow naturally. If the animal is pronounced clean in all these various points, the priest marks him by twisting a piece of papyrus round his horns, and attaching thereto some sealing-clay, which he then stamps with his own signet-ring.⁸ After this the beast is led

¹ They were exempt from taxes, and were provided with a daily allowance of meat, corn, and wine; and when Pharaoh, by the advice of Joseph, took all the land of the Egyptians in lieu of corn (Gen. xlvii. 20, 22), the land of the priests was exempt, and the tax of the fifth part of the produce was not levied upon it.

² Herodotus is quite right in saying they were allowed to drink wine, and the assertion of Plutarch that the kings (who were also of the priestly caste) were not permitted to drink it before the reign of Psammetichus is contradicted by the authority of the Bible (Gen. xl. 10, 13) and the sculptures.

³ Though fish were so generally eaten by the rest of the Egyptians, they were forbidden to the priests. The principal food of the priests was beef and goose, and the gazelle, ibex, oryx, and wild-fowl were not forbidden; but they "abstained from most sorts of pulse, from mutton, and swine's flesh, and in their more solemn purifications they even excluded salt from their meals." Garlick, leeks, onions, lentils, peas, and above all beans, are said to have been excluded from the tables of the priests.

⁴ Diodorus is more correct when he says that some only of the Egyptians abstained from beans, and it may be doubted if they grew in Egypt without being sown. The custom of forbidding beans to the priests was borrowed from Egypt by Pythagoras.

⁵ This is fully confirmed by the sculptures.

⁶ Epaphus, Herodotus says (in ch. 153), is the Greek name of Apis.

⁷ Perhaps we have here, as in vii. 213, a promise that is unfulfilled.

⁸ The sanction given for sacrificing a bull was by a papyrus band tied by the priest round the horns, which he stamped with his signet on sealing-

away; and it is forbidden, under the penalty of death, to sacrifice an animal which has not been marked in this way.

39. The following is their manner of sacrifice:—They lead the victim, marked with their signet, to the altar where they are about to offer it, and setting the wood alight, pour a libation of wine upon the altar in front of the victim, and at the same time invoke the god. Then they slay the animal, and cutting off his head, proceed to flay the body. Next they take the head, and heaping imprecations on it, if there is a market-place and a body of Greek traders in the city, they carry it there and sell it instantly; if, however, there are no Greeks among them, they throw the head into the river. The imprecation is to this effect:—They pray that if any evil is impending either over those who sacrifice, or over universal Egypt, it may be made to fall upon that head. These practices, the imprecations upon the heads, and the libations of wine, prevail all over Egypt, and extend to victims of all sorts; and hence the Egyptians will never eat the head of any animal.

40. The disembowelling and burning are, however, different in different sacrifices. I will mention the mode in use with respect to the goddess whom they regard as the greatest,¹ and honour with the chiefest festival. When they have flayed their steer they pray, and when their prayer is ended they take the paunch of the animal out entire, leaving the intestines and the fat inside the body; they then cut off the legs, the ends of the loins, the shoulders, and the neck; and having so done, they fill the body of the steer with clean bread, honey, raisins, figs, frankincense, myrrh, and other aromatics.² Thus filled, they burn the body, pouring over it great quantities of oil. Before offering the sacrifice they fast, and while the bodies of the victims are being consumed they beat themselves. Afterwards, when they have concluded this part of the ceremony, they have the other parts of the victim served up to them for a repast.

clay. Documents sealed with fine clay and impressed with a signet are very common; but the exact symbols impressed on it by the priest on this occasion are not known.

¹ Herodotus here evidently alludes to Isis, as he shows in chs. 59, 61, where he speaks of her fête at Busiris; but he afterwards confounds her with Athor (ch. 41). This is excusable in the historian, as the attributes of those two goddesses are often so closely connected that it is difficult to distinguish them in the sculptures, unless their names are specified. [In the *Book of the Dead*, Hathor is identified with Isis.—E. H. B.]

² The custom of filling the body with cakes and various things, and then burning it all, calls to mind the Jewish burnt offering (Levit. viii. 25, 26).

41. The male kine, therefore, if clean, and the male calves, are used for sacrifice by the Egyptians universally; but the females they are not allowed to sacrifice,¹ since they are sacred to Isis. The statue of this goddess has the form of a woman but with horns like a cow, resembling thus the Greek representations of Io; and the Egyptians, one and all, venerate cows much more highly than any other animal. This is the reason why no native of Egypt, whether man or woman, will give a Greek a kiss,² or use the knife of a Greek, or his spit, or his cauldron, or taste the flesh of an ox, known to be pure, if it has been cut with a Greek knife. When kine die, the following is the manner of their sepulture:—The females are thrown into the river; the males are buried in the suburbs of the towns, with one or both of their horns appearing above the surface of the ground to mark the place. When the bodies are decayed, a boat comes, at an appointed time, from the island called Prosôpitis,³—which is a portion of the Delta, nine schœnes in circumference,—and calls at the several cities in turn to collect the bones of the oxen. Prosôpitis is a district containing several cities; the name of that from which the boats come is Atarbêchis.⁴ Venus has a temple there of much sanctity. Great numbers of men go forth from this city and proceed to the other towns, where they dig up the bones, which they take away with them and bury together in one place. The same practice prevails with respect to the interment of all other cattle—the law so determining; they do not slaughter any of them.

42. Such Egyptians as possess a temple of the Theban Jove, or live in the Thebaïc canton, offer no sheep in sacrifice,⁵ but only goats; for the Egyptians do not all worship the same

¹ In order to prevent the breed of cattle from being diminished: but some mysterious reason being assigned for it, the people were led to respect an ordonnance which might not otherwise have been attended to. This was the general system, and the reason of many things being held sacred may be attributed to a necessary precaution.

² The Egyptians considered all foreigners unclean, with whom they would not eat, and particularly the Greeks. “The Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians” (Gen. xliii. 32).

³ The island was between the Canopic and Sebennyitic branches, at the fork, and on the west side of the apex of the Delta. It was there that the Athenians, who came to assist the Egyptians against the Persians, were besieged, B.C. 460-458. (Thucyd. i. 109).

⁴ Athor being the Venus of Egypt, Atarbechis was translated Aphroditopolis.

⁵ Sheep are never represented on the altar, or slaughtered for the table, at Thebes, though they were kept there for their wool.

gods,¹ excepting Isis and Osiris, the latter of whom they say is the Grecian Bacchus. Those, on the contrary, who possess a temple dedicated to Mendes,² or belong to the Mendesian canton, abstain from offering goats, and sacrifice sheep instead. The Thebans, and such as imitate them in their practice, give the following account of the origin of the custom:—"Hercules," they say, "wished of all things to see Jove, but Jove did not choose to be seen of him. At length, when Hercules persisted, Jove hit on a device—to flay a ram, and, cutting off his head, hold the head before him, and cover himself with the fleece. In this guise he showed himself to Hercules." Therefore the Egyptians give their statues of Jupiter the face of a ram:³ and from them the practice has passed to the Ammonians, who are a joint colony of Egyptians and Ethiopians, speaking a language between the two; hence also, in my opinion, the latter people took their name of Ammonians, since the Egyptian name for Jupiter is Amun. Such, then, is the reason why the Thebans do not sacrifice rams, but consider them sacred animals. Upon one day in the year, however, at the festival of Jupiter, they slay a single ram, and stripping off the fleece, cover with it the statue of that god, as he once covered himself, and then bring up to the statue of Jove an image of Hercules. When this has been done, the whole assembly beat their breasts in mourning for the ram, and afterwards bury him in a holy sepulchre.

43. The account which I received of this Hercules makes him one of the twelve gods.⁴ Of the other Hercules, with whom the Greeks are familiar, I could hear nothing in any part of Egypt. That the Greeks, however (those I mean who gave the son of Amphitryon that name), took the name⁵ from the Egyptians, and not the Egyptians from the Greeks,⁶ is I think clearly

¹ Though each city had its presiding deity, many others of neighbouring and of distant towns were also admitted to its temples as contemplar gods, and none were positively excluded except some local divinities, and certain animals, whose sanctity was confined to particular places.

² The mounds of *Ashmoun*, on the canal leading to *Ménzaleh*, mark the site of Mendes. The Greeks considered Pan to be both Mendes and Khem.

³ The god Noum (Nou, Noub, or Nef), with a ram's head, answered to Jupiter (Zeus). [See Renouf, *Lectures on Egyptian Religion* (1879), p. 199. —E. H. B.]

⁴ The Egyptian Hercules was the *abstract idea* of divine power, and it is not therefore surprising that Herodotus could learn nothing of the Greek Hercules, who was a hero unknown in Egypt.

⁵ Herodotus, who derived his knowledge of the Egyptian religion from the professional interpreters, seems to have regarded the word "Hercules" as Egyptian. It is scarcely necessary to say that no Egyptian god has a name from which that of Hercules can by any possibility have been formed.

⁶ The tendency of the Greeks to claim an indigenous origin for the deities

proved, among other arguments, by the fact that both the parents of Hercules, Amphitryon as well as Alcmêna, were of Egyptian origin. Again, the Egyptians disclaim all knowledge of the names of Neptune and the Dioscûri, and do not include them in the number of their gods; but had they adopted the name of any god from the Greeks, these would have been the likeliest to obtain notice, since the Egyptians, as I am well convinced, practised navigation at that time, and the Greeks also were some of them mariners, so that they would have been more likely to know the names of these gods than that of Hercules. But the Egyptian Hercules is one of their ancient gods. Seventeen thousand years before the reign of Amasis, the twelve gods were, they affirm, produced from the eight: and of these twelve, Hercules is one.

44. In the wish to get the best information that I could on these matters, I made a voyage to Tyre in Phœnicia, hearing there was a temple of Hercules at that place,¹ very highly venerated. I visited the temple, and found it richly adorned with a number of offerings, among which were two pillars, one of pure gold, the other of emerald,² shining with great brilliancy at night. In a conversation which I held with the priests, I inquired how long their temple had been built, and found by their answer that they, too, differed from the Greeks. They said that the temple was built at the same time that the city was founded, and that the foundation of the city took place two thousand three hundred years ago. In Tyre I remarked another temple where the same god was worshipped as the Thasian Hercules. So I went on to Thasos,³ where I found a temple of Hercules which had been built by the Phœnicians who colonised that island when they sailed in search of Europa. Even this was five generations earlier than the time when Hercules, son of Amphitryon, was born in Greece. These researches show plainly that there is an ancient god Hercules; and my own they borrowed from strangers, and to substitute physical for abstract beings, readily led them to invent the story of Hercules, and every *dignus vindice nodus* was cut by the interposition of his marvellous strength.

¹ The temple of Hercules at Tyre was very ancient, and, according to Herodotus, as old as the city itself, or 2300 years before his time, *i.e.* about 2755 B.C. Hercules presided over it under the title of Melkarth, or Melek-Kartha, "king" (lord) of the city.

² It was probably of glass, which is known to have been made in Egypt at least 3800 years ago, having been found bearing the name of a Pharaoh of the 18th dynasty.

³ Thasos, which still retains its name, is a small island off the Thracian coast.

opinion is, that those Greeks act most wisely who build and maintain two temples of Hercules, in the one of which the Hercules worshipped is known by the name of Olympian, and has sacrifice offered to him as an immortal, while in the other the honours paid are such as are due to a hero.

45. The Greeks tell many tales without due investigation, and among them the following silly fable respecting Hercules:—"Hercules," they say, "went once to Egypt, and there the inhabitants took him, and putting a chaplet on his head, led him out in solemn procession, intending to offer him a sacrifice to Jupiter. For a while he submitted quietly; but when they led him up to the altar and began the ceremonies, he put forth his strength and slew them all." Now to me it seems that such a story proves the Greeks to be utterly ignorant of the character and customs of the people. The Egyptians do not think it allowable even to sacrifice cattle, excepting sheep, and the male kine and calves, provided they be pure, and also geese. How, then, can it be believed that they would sacrifice men? ¹ And again, how would it have been possible for Hercules alone, and, as they confess, a mere mortal, to destroy so many thousands? In saying thus much concerning these matters, may I incur no displeasure either of god or hero!

46. I mentioned above that some of the Egyptians abstain from sacrificing goats, either male or female. The reason is the following:—These Egyptians, who are the Mendesians, consider Pan to be one of the eight gods who existed before the twelve, and Pan is represented in Egypt by the painters and the sculptors, just as he is in Greece, with the face and legs of a goat. They do not, however, believe this to be his shape, or consider him in any respect unlike the other gods; but they represent him thus for a reason which I prefer not to relate. The Mendesians hold all goats in veneration, but the male more than the female, giving the goatherds of the males especial honour. One is venerated more highly than all the rest, and when he dies there is a great mourning throughout all the Mendesian canton. In Egyptian, the goat and Pan are both called Mendes.

47. The pig is regarded among them as an unclean animal, so much so that if a man in passing accidentally touch a pig, he instantly hurries to the river, and plunges in with all his clothes

¹ Herodotus here denies, with reason, the possibility of a people with laws, and a character like those of the Egyptians, having human sacrifices. This very aptly refutes the idle tales of some ancient authors.

on. Hence, too, the swineherds, notwithstanding that they are of pure Egyptian blood, are forbidden to enter into any of the temples, which are open to all other Egyptians; and further, no one will give his daughter in marriage to a swineherd, or take a wife from among them, so that the swineherds are forced to intermarry among themselves. They do not offer swine¹ in sacrifice to any of their gods, excepting Bacchus and the Moon, whom they honour in this way at the same time, sacrificing pigs to both of them at the same full moon, and afterwards eating of the flesh. There is a reason alleged by them for their detestation of swine at all other seasons, and their use of them at this festival, with which I am well acquainted, but which I do not think it proper to mention. The following is the mode in which they sacrifice the swine to the Moon:—As soon as the victim is slain, the tip of the tail, the spleen, and the caul are put together, and having been covered with all the fat that has been found in the animal's belly, are straightway burnt. The remainder of the flesh is eaten on the same day that the sacrifice is offered, which is the day of the full moon: at any other time they would not so much as taste it. The poorer sort, who cannot afford live pigs, form pigs of dough, which they bake and offer in sacrifice.

48. To Bacchus, on the eve of his feast, every Egyptian sacrifices a hog before the door of his house, which is then given back to the swineherd by whom it was furnished, and by him carried away. In other respects the festival is celebrated almost exactly as Bacchic festivals are in Greece, excepting that the Egyptians have no choral dances. They also use instead of phalli another invention, consisting of images a cubit high, pulled by strings, which the women carry round to the villages. A piper goes in front,² and the women follow, singing hymns in honour of Bacchus. They give a religious reason for the peculiarities of the image.

49. Melampus, the son of Amytheon, cannot (I think) have been ignorant of this ceremony—nay, he must, I should conceive, have been well acquainted with it. He it was who intro-

¹ The pig is rarely represented in the sculptures of Thebes. The flesh was forbidden to the priests, and to all initiated in the mysteries, and it seems only to have been allowed to others once a year at the fête of the full moon, when it was sacrificed to the Moon. The reason of the meat not being eaten was its unwholesomeness, on which account it was forbidden to the Jews and Moslems; and the prejudice naturally extended from the animal to those who kept it.

² The instrument used was probably the double-pipe.

duced into Greece the name of Bacchus, the ceremonial of his worship, and the procession of the phallus. He did not, however, so completely apprehend the whole doctrine as to be able to communicate it entirely, but various sages since his time have carried out his teaching to greater perfection. Still it is certain that Melampus introduced the phallus, and that the Greeks learnt from him the ceremonies which they now practise. I therefore maintain that Melampus, who was a wise man, and had acquired the art of divination, having become acquainted with the worship of Bacchus through knowledge derived from Egypt, introduced it into Greece, with a few slight changes, at the same time that he brought in various other practices. For I can by no means allow that it is by mere coincidence that the Bacchic ceremonies in Greece are so nearly the same as the Egyptian—they would then have been more Greek in their character, and less recent in their origin. Much less can I admit that the Egyptians borrowed these customs, or any other, from the Greeks. My belief is that Melampus got his knowledge of them from Cadmus the Tyrian, and the followers whom he brought from Phœnicia into the country which is now called Bœotia.

50. Almost all the names of the gods came into Greece from Egypt.¹ My inquiries prove that they were all derived from a foreign source, and my opinion is that Egypt furnished the greater number. For with the exception of Neptune and the Dioscûri, whom I mentioned above, and Juno, Vesta, Themis, the Graces, and the Nereids, the other gods have been known from time immemorial in Egypt. This I assert on the authority of the Egyptians themselves. The gods, with whose names they profess themselves unacquainted, the Greeks received, I believe, from the Pelasgi, except Neptune. Of him they got their knowledge from the Libyans,² by whom he has been always honoured, and who were anciently the only people that had a god of the name. The Egyptians differ from the Greeks also in paying no divine honours to heroes.³

¹ There is no doubt that the Greeks borrowed sometimes the names, sometimes the attributes, of their deities from Egypt; but when Herodotus says the *names* of the Greek gods were always known in Egypt, it is evident that he does not mean they were the *same* as the Greek, since he gives in other places (chs. 42, 59, 138, 144, 156) the Egyptian name to which those very gods agree, whom he mentions in Egypt.

² Cf. iv. 188.

³ No Egyptian god was supposed to have lived on earth as a mere man afterwards deified. The religion of the Egyptians was the worship of the

51. Besides these which have been here mentioned, there are many other practices whereof I shall speak hereafter, which the Greeks have borrowed from Egypt.¹ The peculiarity, however, which they observe in their statues of Mercury they did not derive from the Egyptians, but from the Pelasgi; from them the Athenians first adopted it, and afterwards it passed from the Athenians to the other Greeks. For just at the time when the Athenians were entering into the Hellenic body, the Pelasgi came to live with them in their country,² whence it was that the latter came first to be regarded as Greeks. Whoever has been initiated into the mysteries of the Cabiri³ will understand what I mean. The Samothracians received these mysteries from the Pelasgi, who, before they went to live in Attica, were dwellers in Samothrace, and imparted their religious ceremonies to the inhabitants. The Athenians, then, who were the first of all the Greeks to make their statues of Mercury in this way, learnt the practice from the Pelasgians; and by this people a religious account of the matter is given, which is explained in the Samothracian mysteries.

52. In early times the Pelasgi, as I know by information which I got at Dodôna, offered sacrifices of all kinds, and prayed to the gods, but had no distinct names or appellations for them, since they had never heard of any. They called them gods (*θεοὶ*, disposers), because they had disposed and arranged all things in such a beautiful order.⁴ After a long lapse of time the names of the gods came to Greece from Egypt, and the Pelasgi learnt them, only as yet they knew nothing of Bacchus, of whom they first heard at a much later date. Not long after

Deity in all his attributes, and in those things which were thought to partake of his essence; but they did not transfer a mortal man to his place, though they allowed a king to pay divine honours to a deceased predecessor, or even to himself, his human doing homage to his divine nature.

¹ Herodotus expressly gives it as his opinion that nearly all the names of the gods were derived from Egypt, and shows that their ceremonies (chs. 81, 82) and science come from the same source.

² The Pelasgi here intended are the Tyrrhenian Pelasgi, who are mentioned again, iv. 145, and vi. 138.

³ Nothing is known for certain respecting the Cabiri. Most authorities agree that they varied in number, and that their worship, which was very ancient in Samothrace and in Phrygia, was carried to Greece from the former by the Pelasgi. They were also worshipped at an early time in Lemnos and Imbros.

⁴ The same derivation is given by Eustathius and by Clement of Alexandria; but the more general belief of the Greeks derived the word *θεός* from *θεῖν*, "to run," because the gods first worshipped were the sun, moon, and stars. Both these derivations are purely fanciful.

the arrival of the names they sent to consult the oracle at Dodôna about them. This is the most ancient oracle in Greece, and at that time there was no other. To their question, "Whether they should adopt the names that had been imported from the foreigners?" the oracle replied by recommending their use. Thenceforth in their sacrifices the Pelasgi made use of the names of the gods, and from them the names passed afterwards to the Greeks. ✓

53. Whence the gods severally sprang, whether or no they had all existed from eternity, what forms they bore—these are questions of which the Greeks knew nothing until the other day, so to speak. For Homer and Hesiod were the first to compose Theogonies, and give the gods their epithets, to allot them their several offices and occupations, and describe their forms; and they lived but four hundred years before my time,¹ as I believe. As for the poets who are thought by some to be earlier than these,² they are, in my judgment, decidedly later writers. In these matters I have the authority of the priestesses of Dodôna for the former portion of my statements; what I have said of Homer and Hesiod is my own opinion.

54. The following tale is commonly told in Egypt concerning the oracle of Dodôna in Greece, and that of Ammon in Libya. My informants on the point were the priests of Jupiter at Thebes. They said "that two of the sacred women were once carried off from Thebes by the Phœnicians,³ and that the story went that one of them was sold into Libya, and the other into Greece, and these women were the first founders of the oracles in the two countries." On my inquiring how they came to know so exactly what became of the women, they answered, "that diligent search had been made after them at the time, but that it had not been found possible to discover where they

¹ The date of Homer has been variously stated. It is plain from the expressions which Herodotus here uses that in his time the general belief assigned to Homer an earlier date than that which he considered the true one. His date would place the poet about B.C. 880-830, which is very nearly the mean between the earliest and the latest epochs that are assigned to him. The time of Hesiod is even more doubtful, if possible, than that of his brother-poet. He was made before Homer, after him, and contemporary with him. Internal evidence and the weight of authority are in favour of the view which assigns him a comparatively late date.

² The "poets thought by some to be earlier than Homer and Hesiod" are probably the mystic writers, Olen, Linus, Orpheus, Musæus, Pamphos, Olympus, etc., who were generally accounted by the Greeks anterior to Homer, but seem really to have belonged to a later age.

³ This carrying off priestesses from Thebes is of course a fable.

were; afterwards, however, they received the information which they had given me."

55. This was what I heard from the priests at Thebes; at Dodôna, however, the women who deliver the oracles relate the matter as follows:—"Two black doves flew away from Egyptian Thebes, and while one directed its flight to Libya, the other came to them.¹ She alighted on an oak, and sitting there began to speak with a human voice, and told them that on the spot where she was, there should thenceforth be an oracle of Jove. They understood the announcement to be from heaven, so they set to work at once and erected the shrine. The dove which flew to Libya bade the Libyans to establish there the oracle of Ammon." This likewise is an oracle of Jupiter. The persons from whom I received these particulars were three priestesses of the Dodonæans, the eldest Promeneia, the next Timareté, and the youngest Nicandra—what they said was confirmed by the other Dodonæans who dwell around the temple.²

56. My own opinion of these matters is as follows:—I think that, if it be true that the Phœnicians carried off the holy women, and sold them for slaves,³ the one into Libya and the other into Greece, or Pelasgia (as it was then called), this last must have been sold to the Thesprotians. Afterwards, while undergoing servitude in those parts, she built under a real oak a temple to Jupiter, her thoughts in her new abode reverting—as it was likely they would do, if she had been an attendant in a temple of Jupiter at Thebes—to that particular god. Then, having acquired a knowledge of the Greek tongue, she set up an oracle. She also mentioned that her sister had been sold for a slave into Libya by the same persons as herself.

57. The Dodonæans called the women doves because they were foreigners, and seemed to them to make a noise like birds. After a while the dove spoke with a human voice, because the woman, whose foreign talk had previously sounded to them like the chattering of a bird, acquired the power of speaking what they could understand. For how can it be conceived possible that a dove should really speak with the voice of a man? Lastly, by calling the dove black the Dodonæans indicated that

¹ The idea of women giving out oracles is Greek, not Egyptian.

² The Temple of Dodona was destroyed B.C. 219 by Dorimachus when, being chosen general of the Ætolians, he ravaged Epirus. (Polyb. iv. 67.) No remains of it now exist.

³ Cf. Joel iii. 6, where the Tyrians are said to have sold Jewish children "to the Grecians." [R.V. "Sons of the Grecians," *i.e.* men of Greek descent.—E. H. B.]

the woman was an Egyptian. And certainly the character of the oracles at Thebes and Dodôna is very similar. Besides this form of divination, the Greeks learnt also divination by means of victims from the Egyptians.

58. The Egyptians were also the first to introduce solemn assemblies,¹ processions, and litanies to the gods; of all which the Greeks were taught the use by them. It seems to me a sufficient proof of this, that in Egypt these practices have been established from remote antiquity, while in Greece they are only recently known.

59. The Egyptians do not hold a single solemn assembly, but several in the course of the year. Of these the chief, which is better attended than any other, is held at the city of Bubastis² in honour of Diana.³ The next in importance is that which takes place at Busiris, a city situated in the very middle of the Delta; it is in honour of Isis, who is called in the Greek tongue Demêter (Ceres). There is a third great festival in Saïs to Minerva, a fourth in Heliopolis to the Sun, a fifth in Buto⁴ to Latona, and a sixth in Paprêmis to Mars.

60. The following are the proceedings on occasion of the assembly at Bubastis:—Men and women come sailing all together, vast numbers in each boat, many of the women with castanets, which they strike, while some of the men pipe during the whole time of the voyage; the remainder of the voyagers, male and female, sing the while, and make a clapping with their hands. When they arrive opposite any of the towns upon the banks of the stream, they approach the shore, and, while some of the women continue to play and sing, others call aloud to the females of the place and load them with abuse, while a certain number dance, and some standing up uncover themselves. After proceeding in this way all along the river-course, they reach Bubastis, where they celebrate the feast with abundant

¹ "Solemn assemblies" were numerous in Egypt, and were of various kinds. The grand assemblies, or great panegyries, were held in the large halls of the principal temples, and the king presided at them in person. There were inferior panegyries in honour of different deities every day during certain months.

² Bubastis, or Pasht, corresponded to the Greek Artemis. Remains of the temple and city of Bubastis, the "Pibeseth" (Pi-basth) of Ezekiel xxx. 17, are still seen at Tel Basta, "the mounds of Pasht." [See *Encyclopædia Biblica*, vol. iii., s.v. PIBESETH. Bubastis was the centre of Egyptian cat-worship.—E. H. B.]

³ Herodotus (*infra*, ch. 156) supposes her the daughter of Bacchus (Osiris) and Isis, which is, of course, an error, as Osiris had no daughter.

⁴ The Goddess mentioned at Bubastis should be Buto.

sacrifices. More grape-wine ¹ is consumed at this festival than in all the rest of the year besides. The number of those who attend, counting only the men and women and omitting the children, amounts, according to the native reports, to seven hundred thousand.

61. The ceremonies at the feast of Isis in the city of Busiris ² have been already spoken of. It is there that the whole multitude, both of men and women, many thousands in number, beat themselves at the close of the sacrifice, in honour of a god, whose name a religious scruple forbids me to mention.³ The Carian dwellers in Egypt proceed on this occasion to still greater lengths, even cutting their faces with their knives,⁴ whereby they let it be seen that they are not Egyptians but foreigners.

62. At Saïs,⁵ when the assembly takes place for the sacrifices, there is one night on which the inhabitants all burn a multitude of lights in the open air round their houses. They use lamps in the shape of flat saucers filled with a mixture of oil and salt,⁶ on the top of which the wick floats. These burn the whole night, and give to the festival the name of the Feast of Lamps. The Egyptians who are absent from the festival observe the night of the sacrifice, no less than the rest, by a general lighting of lamps; so that the illumination is not confined to the city of Saïs, but extends over the whole of Egypt. And there is a religious reason assigned for the special honour paid to this night, as well as for the illumination which accompanies it.

63. At Heliopolis and Buto the assemblies are merely for the purpose of sacrifice; but at Paprêmis,⁷ besides the sacrifices

¹ This is to be distinguished from beer, *οἶνος κριθίνος*, "barley-wine," both of which were made in great quantities in Egypt.

² There were several places called Busiris in Egypt. It signifies the burial place of Osiris. The Busiris mentioned by Herodotus stood [in the Delta] a little to the S. of the modern *Abooseer*, the Coptic *Busiri*, of which nothing now remains but some granite blocks.

³ This was Osiris.

⁴ The custom of cutting themselves was not Egyptian; and it is therefore evident that the command in Leviticus (xix. 28; xxi. 5) against making "any cuttings in their flesh" was not directed against a custom derived from Egypt, but from Syria, where the worshippers of Baal "cut themselves after their manner with knives and lances," 1 Kings xviii. 28.

⁵ The site of Saïs is marked by lofty mounds, enclosing a space of great extent.

⁶ The oil floated on water mixed with salt.

⁷ Papremis is not known in the sculptures as the name of the Egyptian Mars; and it may only have been that of the city, the capital of a nome (ch. 165) which stood between the modern *Menzaleh* and *Damietta* in the

and other rites which are performed there as elsewhere, the following custom is observed:—When the sun is getting low, a few only of the priests continue occupied about the image of the god, while the greater number, armed with wooden clubs, take their station at the portal of the temple. Opposite to them is drawn up a body of men, in number above a thousand, armed, like the others, with clubs, consisting of persons engaged in the performance of their vows. The image of the god, which is kept in a small wooden shrine covered with plates of gold, is conveyed from the temple into a second sacred building the day before the festival begins. The few priests still in attendance upon the image place it, together with the shrine containing it, on a four-wheeled car, and begin to drag it along; the others, stationed at the gateway of the temple, oppose its admission. Then the votaries come forward to espouse the quarrel of the god, and set upon the opponents, who are sure to offer resistance. A sharp fight with clubs ensues, in which heads are commonly broken on both sides. Many, I am convinced, die of the wounds that they receive, though the Egyptians insist that no one is ever killed.

64. The natives give the subjoined account of this festival. They say that the mother of the god Mars once dwelt in the temple. Brought up at a distance from his parent, when he grew to man's estate he conceived a wish to visit her. Accordingly he came, but the attendants, who had never seen him before, refused him entrance, and succeeded in keeping him out. So he went to another city and collected a body of men, with whose aid he handled the attendants very roughly, and forced his way in to his mother. Hence they say arose the custom of a fight with sticks in honour of Mars at this festival.

The Egyptians first made it a point of religion to have no converse with women in the sacred places, and not to enter them without washing, after such converse. Almost all other nations, except the Greeks and the Egyptians, act differently, regarding man as in this matter under no other law than the brutes. Many animals, they say, and various kinds of birds, may be seen to couple in the temples and the sacred precincts, which would certainly not happen if the gods were displeased

Delta. It was here that Inaros routed the Persians (*infra*, iii. 12); and it is remarkable that in this very island, formed by the old Mendesian and the modern Damietta branches, the Crusaders were defeated in 1220, and again in 1249, when Louis IX. was taken prisoner.

at it. Such are the arguments by which they defend their practice, but I nevertheless can by no means approve of it. In these points the Egyptians are specially careful, as they are indeed in everything which concerns their sacred edifices.

65. Egypt, though it borders upon Libya, is not a region abounding in wild animals.¹ The animals that do exist in the country, whether domesticated or otherwise, are all regarded as sacred. If I were to explain why they are consecrated to the several gods, I should be led to speak of religious matters, which I particularly shrink from mentioning; the points whereon I have touched slightly hitherto have all been introduced from sheer necessity. Their custom with respect to animals is as follows:—For every kind there are appointed certain guardians, some male, some female,² whose business it is to look after them; and this honour is made to descend from father to son. The inhabitants of the various cities, when they have made a vow to any god, pay it to his animals in the way which I will now explain. At the time of making the vow they shave the head of the child,³ cutting off all the hair, or else half, or sometimes a third part, which they then weigh in a balance against a sum of silver; and whatever sum the hair weighs is presented to the guardian of the animals, who thereupon cuts up some fish, and gives it to them for food—such being the stuff whereon they are fed. When a man has killed one of the sacred animals, if he did it with malice prepense, he is punished with death;⁴ if unwittingly, he has to pay such a fine as the priests choose to

¹ This was thought to be extraordinary, because Africa abounded in wild animals (*infra*, iv. 191-2); but it was on the west and south, and not on the confines of Egypt, that they were numerous. Though Herodotus abstains from saying why the Egyptians held some animals sacred, he explains it in some degree by observing that Egypt did not abound in animals. It was therefore found necessary to ensure the preservation of some, as in the case of cows and sheep; others were sacred in consequence of their being unwholesome food, as swine, and certain fish; and others from their utility in destroying noxious reptiles, as the cat, ichneumon, ibis, vulture, and falcon tribe: or for some particular purpose, as the crocodile was sacred in places distant from the Nile, where the canals required keeping up.

² Women were probably employed to give the food to many of the animals; but the curators appear to have been men of the sacerdotal class.

³ Though Egyptian men shaved their heads, boys had several tufts of hair left, as in modern Egypt and China. Princes also wore a long plaited lock, falling from near the top of the head, behind the ear, to the neck.

⁴ The law was, as Herodotus says, against a person killing them on purpose, but the prejudiced populace in after times did not always keep within the law.

impose. When an ibis, however, or a hawk is killed, whether it was done by accident or on purpose, the man must needs die.

66. The number of domestic animals in Egypt is very great, and would be still greater were it not for what befalls the cats. As the females, when they have kittened, no longer seek the company of the males, these last, to obtain once more their companionship, practise a curious artifice. They seize the kittens, carry them off, and kill them, but do not eat them afterwards. Upon this the females, being deprived of their young, and longing to supply their place, seek the males once more, since they are particularly fond of their offspring. On every occasion of a fire in Egypt the strangest prodigy occurs with the cats. The inhabitants allow the fire to rage as it pleases, while they stand about at intervals and watch these animals, which, slipping by the men or else leaping over them, rush headlong into the flames. When this happens, the Egyptians are in deep affliction. If a cat dies in a private house by a natural death, all the inmates of the house shave their eyebrows; on the death of a dog they shave the head and the whole of the body.

67. The cats on their decease are taken to the city of Bubastis,¹ where they are embalmed, after which they are buried in certain sacred repositories. The dogs are interred in the cities to which they belong, also in sacred burial-places. The same practice obtains with respect to the ichneumons;² the hawks and shrew-mice, on the contrary, are conveyed to the city of Buto for burial, and the ibises³ to Hermopolis. The bears, which are scarce in Egypt,⁴ and the wolves, which are not much bigger than foxes,⁵ they bury wherever they happen to find them lying.

68. The following are the peculiarities of the crocodile:—During the four winter months they eat nothing;⁶ they are

¹ Cats were embalmed and buried where they died, except perhaps in the neighbourhood of Bubastis; for we find their mummies at Thebes and other Egyptian towns, and the same may be said of hawks and ibises.

² The *viverra* ichneumon is still very common in Egypt.

³ These birds were sacred to Thoth, the god of letters.

⁴ It is very evident that bears were not natives of Egypt; they are not represented among the animals of the country; and no instance occurs of a bear in the sculptures, except as a curiosity brought by foreigners.

⁵ Herodotus is quite correct in saying that wolves in Egypt were scarcely larger than foxes. It is singular that he omits all mention of the hyæna, which is so common in the country, and which is represented in the sculptures of Upper and Lower Egypt.

⁶ If the crocodile rarely comes out of the river in the cold weather, because it finds the water warmer than the external air at that season, there is

four-footed, and live indifferently on land or in the water. The female lays and hatches her eggs ashore, passing the greater portion of the day on dry land, but at night retiring to the river, the water of which is warmer than the night-air and the dew. Of all known animals this is the one which from the smallest size grows to be the greatest: for the egg of the crocodile is but little bigger than that of the goose, and the young crocodile is in proportion to the egg; yet when it is full grown, the animal measures frequently seventeen cubits and even more. It has the eyes of a pig, teeth large and tusk-like, of a size proportioned to its frame; unlike any other animal, it is without a tongue; it cannot move its under-jaw, and in this respect too it is singular, being the only animal in the world which moves the upper-jaw but not the under. It has strong claws and a scaly skin, impenetrable upon the back. In the water it is blind, but on land it is very keen of sight. As it lives chiefly in the river, it has the inside of its mouth constantly covered with leeches; hence it happens that, while all the other birds and beasts avoid it, with the trochilus it lives at peace, since it owes much to that bird: for the crocodile, when he leaves the water and comes out upon the land, is in the habit of lying with his mouth wide open, facing the western breeze: at such times the trochilus goes into his mouth and devours the leeches. This benefits the crocodile, who is pleased, and takes care not to hurt the trochilus.

69. The crocodile is esteemed sacred by some of the Egyptians, by others he is treated as an enemy. Those who live near Thebes, and those who dwell around Lake Moëris, regard them with especial veneration. In each of these places they keep one crocodile in particular, who is taught to be tame and tractable. They adorn his ears¹ with ear-rings of molten stone² or gold, and put bracelets on his fore-paws, giving him daily a set portion of bread, with a certain number of victims; and,

no reason to believe it remains torpid all that time, though, like all the lizard tribe, it can exist a long time without eating, and I have known them live in a house for three months without food, sleeping most of the time. The story of the friendly offices of the Trochilus appears to be derived from that bird's uttering a shrill note as it flies away on the approach of man, and (quite unintentionally) warning the crocodile of danger.

¹ The crocodile's ears are merely small openings without any flesh projecting beyond the head.

² By molten stone seems to be meant glass, which was well known to the Egyptians.

after having thus treated him with the greatest possible attention while alive, they embalm him when he dies and bury him in a sacred repository. The people of Elephantiné, on the other hand, are so far from considering these animals as sacred that they even eat their flesh. In the Egyptian language they are not called crocodiles, but Champsæ. The name of crocodiles was given them by the Ionians, who remarked their resemblance to the lizards, which in Ionia live in the walls, and are called crocodiles.¹

70. The modes of catching the crocodile are many and various. I shall only describe the one which seems to me most worthy of mention. They bait a hook with a chine of pork and let the meat be carried out into the middle of the stream, while the hunter upon the bank holds a living pig, which he belabours. The crocodile hears its cries, and, making for the sound, encounters the pork, which he instantly swallows down. The men on the shore haul, and when they have got him to land, the first thing the hunter does is to plaster his eyes with mud. This once accomplished, the animal is despatched with ease, otherwise he gives great trouble.

71. The hippopotamus,² in the canton of Paprêmis, is a sacred animal, but not in any other part of Egypt. It may be thus described:—It is a quadruped, cloven-footed, with hoofs like an ox, and a flat nose. It has the mane and tail of a horse, huge tusks which are very conspicuous, and a voice like a horse's neigh. In size it equals the biggest oxen, and its skin is so tough that when dried it is made into javelins.

72. Otters also are found in the Nile, and are considered sacred. Only two sorts of fish are venerated,³ that called the lepidôtus and the eel. These are regarded as sacred to the Nile, as likewise among birds is the vulpanser, or fox-goose.⁴

73. They have also another sacred bird called the phoenix, which I myself have never seen, except in pictures. Indeed it is a great rarity, even in Egypt, only coming there (according

¹ Κροκόδειλος was the term given by the Ionians to lizards, as the Portuguese *al legato* "the lizard" is the origin of our alligator. The Ionians are here the descendants of the Ionian soldiers of Psammetichus.

² This animal was formerly common in Egypt, but is now rarely seen as low as the second cataract. The description of the hippopotamus by Herodotus is far from correct.

³ The fish particularly sacred were the Oxyrhinchus, the Lepidotus, and the Phagrus or eel.

⁴ This goose of the Nile was an emblem of the God Seb, the father of Osiris; but it was not a sacred bird.

to the accounts of the people of Heliopolis) once in five hundred years, when the old phoenix dies. Its size and appearance, if it is like the pictures, are as follow:—The plumage is partly red, partly golden, while the general make and size are almost exactly that of the eagle. They tell a story of what this bird does, which does not seem to me to be credible: that he comes all the way from Arabia, and brings the parent bird, all plastered over with myrrh, to the temple of the Sun, and there buries the body. In order to bring him, they say, he first forms a ball of myrrh as big as he finds that he can carry; then he hollows out the ball, and puts his parent inside, after which he covers over the opening with fresh myrrh, and the ball is then of exactly the same weight as at first; so he brings it to Egypt, plastered over as I have said, and deposits it in the temple of the Sun. Such is the story they tell of the doings of this bird.

74. In the neighbourhood of Thebes there are some sacred serpents¹ which are perfectly harmless.² They are of small size, and have two horns growing out of the top of the head. These snakes, when they die, are buried in the temple of Jupiter, the god to whom they are sacred.

75. I went once to a certain place in Arabia, almost exactly opposite the city of Buto, to make inquiries concerning the winged serpents.³ On my arrival I saw the back-bones and ribs of serpents in such numbers as it is impossible to describe: of the ribs there were a multitude of heaps, some great, some small, some middle-sized. The place where the bones lie is at the entrance of a narrow gorge between steep mountains, which there open upon a spacious plain communicating with the great plain of Egypt. The story goes, that with the spring the winged snakes come flying from Arabia towards Egypt, but are met in this gorge by the birds called ibises, who forbid their entrance and destroy them all. The Arabians assert, and the Egyptians also admit, that it is on account of the service thus rendered that the Egyptians hold the ibis in so much reverence.

76. The ibis is a bird of a deep-black colour, with legs like a

¹ The horned snake, *vipera cerastes*, is common in Upper Egypt and throughout the deserts. It is very poisonous, and its habit of burying itself in the sand renders it particularly dangerous.

² The bite of the cerastes or horned snake is deadly; but of the many serpents in Egypt, three only are poisonous—the cerastes, the asp or naia, and the common viper.

³ The winged serpents of Herodotus have puzzled many persons from the time of Pausanias to the present day. Isaiah (xxx. 6) mentions the “fiery flying serpent.”

crane; its beak is strongly hooked, and its size is about that of the landrail. This is a description of the black ibis which contends with the serpents. The commoner sort, for there are two quite distinct species,¹ has the head and the whole throat bare of feathers; its general plumage is white, but the head and neck are jet black, as also are the tips of the wings and the extremity of the tail; in its beak and legs it resembles the other species. The winged serpent is shaped like the water-snake. Its wings are not feathered, but resemble very closely those of the bat. And thus I conclude the subject of the sacred animals.

77. With respect to the Egyptians themselves, it is to be remarked that those who live in the corn country,² devoting themselves, as they do, far more than any other people in the world, to the preservation of the memory of past actions, are the best skilled in history of any men that I have ever met. The following is the mode of life habitual to them:—For three successive days in each month they purge the body by means of emetics and clysters, which is done out of a regard for their health, since they have a persuasion that every disease to which men are liable is occasioned by the substances whereon they feed. Apart from any such precautions, they are, I believe, next to the Libyans,³ the healthiest people in the world—an effect of their climate, in my opinion, which has no sudden changes. Diseases almost always attack men when they are exposed to a change, and never more than during changes of the weather. They live on bread made of spelt, which they form into loaves called in their own tongue *cyllêstis*. Their

¹ The great services the ibis rendered by destroying snakes and noxious insects were the cause of its being in such esteem in Egypt. The stork was honoured for the same reason in Thessaly. The ibis was sacred to Thoth, the Egyptian Hermes.

² This is in contradistinction to the marsh-lands, and signifies Upper Egypt; but when he says they have no vines in the country and only drink beer, his statement is opposed to fact, and to the ordinary habits of the Egyptians. In the neighbourhood of Memphis, at Thebes, and the places between those two cities, as well as at Eileithyas, all corn-growing districts, they ate wheaten bread and cultivated the vine. Herodotus may, therefore, have had in view the corn-country, in the interior of the broad Delta, where the alluvial soil was not well suited to the vine. Wine was universally used by the rich throughout Egypt, and beer supplied its place at the tables of the poor, not because "they had no vines in their country," but because it was cheaper. And that wine was known in Lower as well as Upper Egypt is shown by the Israelites mentioning the desert as a place which had "no figs, or vines, or pomegranates" in contradistinction to Egypt (Gen. xl. 10; Numb. xx. 5).

³ Their health was attributable to their living in the dry atmosphere of the desert, where sickness is rarely known.

drink is a wine which they obtain from barley,¹ as they have no vines in their country. Many kinds of fish they eat raw, either salted or dried in the sun.² Quails also, and ducks and small birds, they eat uncooked, merely first salting them. All other birds and fishes, excepting those which are set apart as sacred, are eaten either roasted or boiled.

78. In social meetings among the rich, when the banquet is ended, a servant carries round to the several guests a coffin, in which there is a wooden image of a corpse,³ carved and painted to resemble nature as nearly as possible, about a cubit or two cubits in length. As he shows it to each guest in turn, the servant says, "Gaze here, and drink and be merry; for when you die, such will you be."

79. The Egyptians adhere to their own national customs, and adopt no foreign usages. Many of these customs are worthy of note: among others their song, the Linus,⁴ which is sung under various names not only in Egypt but in Phœnicia, in Cyprus, and in other places; and which seems to be exactly the same as that in use among the Greeks, and by them called Linus. There were very many things in Egypt which filled me with astonishment, and this was one of them. Whence could the Egyptians have got the Linus? It appears to have been sung by them from the very earliest times. For the Linus in Egyptian is called Manerôs; and they told me that Manerôs was the only son of their first king, and that on his untimely death he was honoured by the Egyptians with these dirgelike strains, and in this way they got their first and only melody.

80. There is another custom in which the Egyptians resemble a particular Greek people, namely the Lacedæmonians. Their young men, when they meet their elders in the streets, give way to them and step aside;⁵ and if an elder come in where young men are present, these latter rise from their seats. In a

¹ This is the *οἶνος κριθῶνος* of Xenophon.

² The custom of drying fish is frequently represented in the sculptures of Upper and Lower Egypt. Fishing was a favourite amusement of the Egyptians.

³ The figure introduced at supper was of a mummy in the usual form of Osiris, either standing, or lying on a bier, intended to warn the guests of their mortality.

⁴ This song had different names in Egypt, in Phœnicia, in Cyprus, and other places. In Greece it was called Linus, in Egypt Maneros. The stories told of Linus, the inventor of melody, and of his death, are mere fables.

⁵ A similar respect is paid to age by the Chinese and Japanese, and even by the modern Egyptians. In this the Greeks, except the Lacedæmonians,

third point they differ entirely from all the nations of Greece. Instead of speaking to each other when they meet in the streets, they make an obeisance, sinking the hand to the knee.

81. They wear a linen tunic fringed about the legs, and called *calasiris*; over this they have a white woollen garment thrown on afterwards. Nothing of woollen, however, is taken into their temples or buried with them, as their religion forbids it. Here their practice resembles the rites called Orphic and Bacchic, but which are in reality Egyptian and Pythagorean; for no one initiated in these mysteries can be buried in a woollen shroud, a religious reason being assigned for the observance.

82. The Egyptians likewise discovered to which of the gods each month and day is sacred;¹ and found out from the day of a man's birth, what he will meet with in the course of his life,² and how he will end his days, and what sort of man he will be—discoveries whereof the Greeks engaged in poetry have made a use. The Egyptians have also discovered more prognostics than all the rest of mankind besides. Whenever a prodigy takes place, they watch and record the result; then, if anything similar ever happens again, they expect the same consequences.

83. With respect to divination, they hold that it is a gift which no mortal possesses, but only certain of the gods:³ thus they have an oracle of Hercules, one of Apollo, of Minerva, of Diana, of Mars, and of Jupiter. Besides these, there is the oracle of Latona at Buto, which is held in much higher repute than any of the rest. The mode of delivering the oracles is not uniform, but varies at the different shrines.

were wanting. The Jews were commanded to "rise up before the hoary head and honour the face of the old man" (Levit. xix. 32).

¹ The Romans also made their twelve gods preside over the months; and the days of the week, when introduced in late times, received the names of the sun and moon and five planets, which have been retained to the present day.

² Horoscopes were of very early use in Egypt, as well as the interpretation of dreams; and Cicero speaks of the Egyptians and Chaldees predicting future events, as well as a man's destiny at his birth, by their observations of the stars.

³ Yet the Egyptians sought "to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that had familiar spirits, and to the wizards" (Is. xix. 3). Herodotus probably means that none but oracles gave the real answer of the deity; and this would not prevent the "prophets" and "magicians" pretending to this art, like the *μάντεις* of Greece. To the Israelites it was particularly forbidden "to use divination, to be an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer."

84. Medicine is practised among them¹ on a plan of separation; each physician treats a single disorder, and no more:² thus the country swarms with medical practitioners, some undertaking to cure diseases of the eye, others of the head, others again of the teeth, others of the intestines, and some those which are not local.

85. The following is the way in which they conduct their mournings³ and their funerals:—On the death in any house of a man of consequence, forthwith the women of the family bespatter their heads, and sometimes even their faces, with mud; and then, leaving the body indoors, sally forth and wander through the city, with their dress fastened by a band, and their bosoms bare, beating themselves as they walk. All the female relations join them and do the same. The men too, similarly begirt, beat their breasts separately. When these ceremonies are over, the body is carried away to be embalmed.

86. There are a set of men in Egypt who practice the art of embalming, and make it their proper business. These persons, when a body is brought to them, show the bearers various models of corpses,⁴ made in wood, and painted so as to resemble

¹ Not only was the study of medicine of very early date in Egypt, but medical men there were in such repute that they were sent for at various times from other countries. Their knowledge of medicine is celebrated by Homer (*Od.* iv. 229), who describes Polydamna, the wife of Thonis, as giving medicinal plants "to Helen, in Egypt, a country producing an infinite number of drugs . . . where each physician possesses knowledge above all other men." "O virgin daughter of Egypt," says Jeremiah (*lxvi.* 11), "in vain shalt thou use many medicines." Cyrus and Darius both sent to Egypt for medical men (*Her.* iii. 1, 132); and Pliny (*xix.* 5) says *post-mortem* examinations were made in order to discover the nature of maladies. [Cf. Erman, *Life in Ancient Egypt*, pp. 377 sqq.—E. H. B.]

² The medical profession being so divided (as is the custom in modern Europe), indicates a great advancement of civilisation, as well as of medicinal knowledge. The Egyptian doctors were of the sacerdotal order, like the embalmers, who are called (*in Genesis* i. 2) "Physicians," and were "commanded by Joseph to embalm his father."

³ The custom of weeping, and throwing dust on their heads, is often represented on the monuments; when the men and women have their dresses fastened by a band round the waist, the breast being bare, as described by Herodotus. For seventy days (*Gen.* l. 3), or, according to some, seventy-two days, the family mourned at home, singing the funeral dirge.

⁴ These were in the form of Osiris, and not only those of the best kind, but all the mummies were put up in the same position, representing the deceased as a figure of Osiris, those only excepted which were of the very poor people, and which were merely wrapped up in mats, or some other common covering. Even the small earthenware and other figures of the dead were in the same form of that Deity, whose name Herodotus, as usual, had scruples about mentioning, from having been admitted to a participation of the secrets of the lesser Mysteries.

nature. The most perfect is said to be after the manner of him whom I do not think it religious to name in connection with such a matter; the second sort is inferior to the first, and less costly; the third is the cheapest of all. All this the embalmers explain, and then ask in which way it is wished that the corpse should be prepared. The bearers tell them, and having concluded their bargain, take their departure, while the embalmers, left to themselves, proceed to their task. The mode of embalming, according to the most perfect process, is the following:—They take first a crooked piece of iron,¹ and with it draw out the brain through the nostrils, thus getting rid of a portion, while the skull is cleared of the rest by rinsing with drugs; next they make a cut along the flank with a sharp Ethiopian stone,² and take out the whole contents of the abdomen, which they then cleanse, washing it thoroughly with palm wine, and again frequently with an infusion of pounded aromatics. After this they fill the cavity with the purest bruised myrrh, with cassia, and every other sort of spicery³ except frankincense, and sew up the opening. Then the body is placed in natrum⁴ for seventy days, and covered entirely over. After the expiration of that space of time, which must not be exceeded, the body is washed, and wrapped round, from head to foot, with bandages of fine linen cloth,⁵ smeared over with gum, which is used generally by the Egyptians in the place of glue, and in this state it is given back to the relations, who enclose it in a wooden case which they have had made for the purpose, shaped into the figure of a man. Then fastening the case, they place it in a sepulchral chamber, upright against the wall. Such is the most costly way of embalming the dead.

87. If persons wish to avoid expense, and choose the second

¹ The mummies afford ample evidence of the brain having been extracted through the nostrils; and the "drugs" were employed to clear out what the instrument could not touch.

² Ethiopian stone either is *black flint*, or an Ethiopian agate, the use of which was the remnant of a very primitive custom. [An embalming knife, used for this one purpose only: see King and Hall's *Egypt and W. Asia in the Light of Modern Discoveries*, p. 14.—E. H. B.]

³ The "spicery, and balm, and myrrh," carried by the Ishmaelites (or Arabs) to Egypt were principally for the embalmers, who were doubtless supplied regularly with them. (Gen. xxxvii. 25.) Other caravans, like the Midianite merchantmen (Gen. xxxvii. 28), visited Egypt for trade; and "the spice merchants" are noticed (1 Kings x. 15) in Solomon's time.

⁴ *i.e.* subcarbonate of soda, which abounds at the natron lakes in the Lybian desert.

⁵ Not cotton. The microscope has decided (what no one ever doubted in Egypt) that the mummy-cloths are linen.

process, the following is the method pursued:—Syringes are filled with oil made from the cedar-tree, which is then, without any incision¹ or disembowelling, injected into the abdomen. The passage by which it might be likely to return is stopped, and the body laid in natrum the prescribed number of days. At the end of the time the cedar-oil is allowed to make its escape; and such is its power that it brings with it the whole stomach and intestines in a liquid state. The natrum meanwhile has dissolved the flesh, and so nothing is left of the dead body but the skin and the bones. It is returned in this condition to the relatives, without any further trouble being bestowed upon it.

88. The third method of embalming, which is practised in the case of the poorer classes, is to clear out the intestines with a clyster, and let the body lie in natrum the seventy days, after which it is at once given to those who come to fetch it away.

89. The wives of men of rank are not given to be embalmed immediately after death, nor indeed are any of the more beautiful and valued women. It is not till they have been dead three or four days that they are carried to the embalmers. This is done to prevent indignities from being offered them. It is said that once a case of this kind occurred: the man was detected by the information of his fellow-workman.

90. Whensoever any one, Egyptian or foreigner, has lost his life by falling a prey to a crocodile, or by drowning in the river, the law compels the inhabitants of the city near which the body is cast up to have it embalmed, and to bury it in one of the sacred repositories with all possible magnificence.² No one may touch the corpse, not even any of the friends or relatives, but only the priests of the Nile, who prepare it for burial with their own hands—regarding it as something more than the mere body of a man—and themselves lay it in the tomb.

91. The Egyptians are averse to adopt Greek customs, or, in a word, those of any other nation. This feeling is almost universal among them. At Chemmis,³ however, which is a

¹ Second-class mummies without any incision are found in the tombs; but the opening in the side was made in many of them, and occasionally even in those of an inferior quality; so that it was not exclusively confined to mummies of the first class. There were, in fact, many gradations in each class.

² The law which obliged the people to embalm the body of any one found dead, and to bury it in the most expensive manner, was a police, as well as a sanatory, regulation.

³ Khem, the god of Chemmis, or Khemmo, being supposed to answer to Pan, this city was called Panopolis by the Greeks and Romans.

large city in the Thebaïc canton, near Neapolis,¹ there is a square enclosure sacred to Perseus, son of Danaë. Palm trees grow all round the place, which has a stone gateway of an unusual size, surmounted by two colossal statues,² also in stone. Inside this precinct is a temple, and in the temple an image of Perseus. The people of Chemmis say that Perseus often appears to them, sometimes within the sacred enclosure, sometimes in the open country: one of the sandals which he has worn is frequently found—two cubits in length, as they affirm—and then all Egypt flourishes greatly. In the worship of Perseus Greek ceremonies are used; gymnastic games are celebrated in his honour, comprising every kind of contest, with prizes of cattle, cloaks, and skins. I made inquiries of the Chemmites why it was that Perseus appeared to them and not elsewhere in Egypt, and how they came to celebrate gymnastic contests unlike the rest of the Egyptians: to which they answered, “that Perseus belonged to their city by descent. Danaüs and Lynceus were Chemmites before they set sail for Greece, and from them Perseus was descended,” they said, tracing the genealogy; “and he, when he came to Egypt for the purpose” (which the Greeks also assign) “of bringing away from Libya the Gorgon’s head, paid them a visit, and acknowledged them for his kinsmen—he had heard the name of their city from his mother before he left Greece—he bade them institute a gymnastic contest in his honour, and that was the reason why they observed the practice.”

92. The customs hitherto described are those of the Egyptians who live above the marsh-country. The inhabitants of the marshes have the same customs as the rest, as well in those matters which have been mentioned above as in respect of marriage, each Egyptian taking to himself, like the Greeks, a single wife;³ but for greater cheapness of living the marsh-men practise certain peculiar customs, such as these following. They gather the blossoms of a certain water-lily, which grows in great abundance all over the flat country at the time when the Nile rises and floods the regions along its banks—the Egyp-

¹ The “*neighbouring* Neapolis” is at least ninety miles further up the river, and sixty in a direct line. It has been succeeded by the modern *Keneh*, a name taken from the Greek *καινή πόλις*, the “Newtown” of those days.

² The court planted with trees seems to be the “grove” mentioned in the Bible. [Uncertain: see *Encyclopædia Biblica*, s.v. ASHERAH.—E. H. B.]

³ There is no instance on the monuments of Egypt of a man having more than one wife at a time.

tians call it the lotus ¹—they gather, I say, the blossoms of this plant and dry them in the sun, after which they extract from the centre of each blossom a substance like the head of a poppy, which they crush and make into bread. The root of the lotus is likewise eatable, and has a pleasant sweet taste: it is round, and about the size of an apple. There is also another species of the lily in Egypt, which grows, like the lotus, in the river, and resembles the rose. The fruit springs up side by side with the blossom, on a separate stalk, and has almost exactly the look of the comb made by wasps. It contains a number of seeds, about the size of an olive-stone, which are good to eat: and these are eaten both green and dried. The byblus ² (papyrus), which grows year after year in the marshes, they pull up, and, cutting the plant in two, reserve the upper portion for other purposes, but take the lower, which is about a cubit long, and either eat it or else sell it. Such as wish to enjoy the byblus in full perfection bake it first in a closed vessel, heated to a glow. Some of these folk, however, live entirely on fish, which are gutted as soon as caught, and then hung up in the sun: when dry, they are used as food.

93. Gregarious fish are not found in any numbers in the rivers; they frequent the lagunes, whence, at the season of breeding, they proceed in shoals towards the sea. The males lead the way, and drop their milt as they go, while the females, following close behind, eagerly swallow it down. From this they conceive,³ and when, after passing some time in the sea, they begin to be in spawn, the whole shoal sets off on its return to its ancient haunts. Now, however, it is no longer the males, but the females, who take the lead: they swim in front in a body, and do exactly as the males did before, dropping, little by little, their grains of spawn as they go, while the males in the rear devour the grains, each one of which is a fish.⁴ A portion

¹ This *Nymphæa Lotus* grows in ponds and small channels in the Delta during the inundation, which are dry during the rest of the year; but it is not found in the Nile itself. It is nearly the same as our white water-lily. The lotus flower was always presented to guests at an Egyptian party; and garlands were put round their heads and necks.

² The use of the pith of its triangular stalk for paper made it a very valuable plant; and the right of growing the best quality, and of selling the papyrus made from it, belonged to the Government.

³ Aristotle shows the absurdity of this statement.

⁴ The male fish deposits the milt *after* the female has deposited the spawn, and thus renders it prolific. The swallowing of the spawn is simply the act of any hungry fish, male or female, who happens to find it. The bruised heads are a fable.

of the spawn escapes and is not swallowed by the males, and hence come the fishes which grow afterwards to maturity. When any of this sort of fish are taken on their passage to the sea, they are found to have the left side of the head scarred and bruised; while if taken on their return, the marks appear on the right. The reason is, that as they swim down the Nile seaward, they keep close to the bank of the river upon their left, and returning again up stream they still cling to the same side, hugging it and brushing against it constantly, to be sure that they miss not their road through the great force of the current. When the Nile begins to rise, the hollows in the land and the marshy spots near the river are flooded before any other places by the percolation of the water through the river-banks;¹ and these, almost as soon as they become pools, are found to be full of numbers of little fishes. I think that I understand how it is this comes to pass. On the subsidence of the Nile the year before, though the fish retired with the retreating waters, they had first deposited their spawn in the mud upon the banks; and so, when at the usual season the water returns, small fry are rapidly engendered out of the spawn of the preceding year. So much concerning the fish.

94. The Egyptians who live in the marshes² use for the anointing of their bodies an oil made from the fruit of the sillicyprum,³ which is known among them by the name of "kiki." To obtain this they plant the sillicyprium (which grows wild in Greece) along the banks of the rivers and by the sides of the lakes, where it produces fruit in great abundance, but with a very disagreeable smell. This fruit is gathered, and then bruised and pressed, or else boiled down after roasting: the liquid which comes from it is collected and is found to be unctuous, and as well suited as olive-oil for lamps, only that it gives out an unpleasant odour.

95. The contrivances which they use against gnats, where-with the country swarms, are the following. In the parts of Egypt above the marshes the inhabitants pass the night upon

¹ The sudden appearance of the young fish in the ponds was simply owing to these being supplied by the canals from the river, or by its overflowing its banks.

² The intimate acquaintance of Herodotus with the inhabitants of the marsh-region is probably owing to the important position occupied by that region in the revolt of Inaros, which the Athenians, whom Herodotus probably accompanied, went to assist.

³ This was the *Ricinus communis*, the Castor-oil plant.

lofty towers,¹ which are of great service, as the gnats are unable to fly to any height on account of the winds. In the marsh-country, where there are no towers, each man possesses a net instead. By day it serves him to catch fish, while at night he spreads it over the bed in which he is to rest, and creeping in, goes to sleep underneath. The gnats, which, if he rolls himself up in his dress or in a piece of muslin, are sure to bite through the covering, do not so much as attempt to pass the net.

96. The vessels used in Egypt for the transport of merchandise are made of the *Acantha* (Thorn), a tree which in its growth is very like the Cyrenaïc lotus, and from which there exudes a gum. They cut a quantity of planks about two cubits in length from this tree, and then proceed to their ship-building, arranging the planks like bricks, and attaching them by ties to a number of long stakes or poles till the hull is complete, when they lay the cross-planks on the top from side to side. They give the boats no ribs, but caulk the seams with papyrus on the inside. Each has a single rudder, which is driven straight through the keel. The mast is a piece of *acantha*-wood, and the sails are made of papyrus. These boats cannot make way against the current unless there is a brisk breeze; they are, therefore, towed up-stream from the shore: down-stream they are managed as follows. There is a raft belonging to each, made of the wood of the tamarisk, fastened together with a wattling of reeds; and also a stone bored through the middle about two talents in weight. The raft is fastened to the vessel by a rope, and allowed to float down the stream in front, while the stone is attached by another rope astern.² The result is, that the raft, hurried forward by the current, goes rapidly down the river, and drags the "baris" (for so they call this sort of boat) after it; while the stone, which is pulled along in the wake of the vessel, and lies deep in the water, keeps the boat straight. There are a vast number of these vessels in Egypt, and some of them are of many thousand talents' burthen.

97. When the Nile overflows, the country is converted into a sea, and nothing appears but the cities, which look like the islands in the Egean.³ At this season boats no longer keep the course of the river, but sail right across the plain. On the voyage from Naucratis to Memphis at this season, you pass

¹ A similar practice is found in the valley of the Indus. The custom of sleeping on the flat roofs of their houses is still common in Egypt.

² A similar practice prevails to this day on the Euphrates.

³ This still happens in those years when the inundation is very high.

close to the pyramids, whereas the usual course is by the apex of the Delta, and the city of Cercasôrus. You can sail also from the maritime town of Canôbus across the flat to Naucratis, passing by the cities of Anthylla and Archandropolis.

98. The former of these cities, which is a place of note, is assigned expressly to the wife of the ruler of Egypt for the time being, to keep her in shoes. Such has been the custom ever since Egypt fell under the Persian yoke. The other city seems to me to have got its name of Archandropolis from Archander the Phthian, son of Achæus, and son-in-law of Danaus. There might certainly have been another Archander; but, at any rate, the name is not Egyptian.

99. Thus far I have spoken of Egypt from my own observation, relating what I myself saw, the ideas that I formed, and the results of my own researches. What follows rests on the accounts given me by the Egyptians, which I shall now repeat, adding thereto some particulars which fell under my own notice.

The priests said that Mên was the first king of Egypt,¹ and that it was he who raised the dyke which protects Memphis from the inundations of the Nile. Before his time the river flowed entirely along the sandy range of hills which skirts Egypt on the side of Libya. He, however, by banking up the river at the bend which it forms about a hundred furlongs south of Memphis, laid the ancient channel dry, while he dug a new course for the stream half-way between the two lines of hills. To this day, the elbow which the Nile forms at the point where it is forced aside into the new channel is guarded with the greatest care by the Persians, and strengthened every year; for if the river were to burst out at this place, and pour over the mound, there would be danger of Memphis being completely overwhelmed by the flood. Mên, the first king, having thus, by turning the river, made the tract where it used to run, dry land, proceeded in the first place to build the city now called Memphis, which lies in the narrow part of Egypt; after which he further excavated a lake outside the town, to the north and west, communicating with the river, which was itself the eastern

¹ Manetho, Eratosthenes, and other writers, agree with Herodotus that Mên or Menes (the Mna, or Menai, of the monuments) was the first Egyptian king. [As I have already noted, Menes is not an historical figure. Possibly Aha and Narmer—first conquerors of the North and unifiers of the kingdom—were the originals of the legendary king. Since Rawlinson wrote, the spade of the archæologist has unearthed a vast mass of material bearing on Egyptian history; and a new chapter in the history of the world has been recovered.—E. H. B.]

boundary. Besides these works,¹ he also, the priests said, built the temple of Vulcan which stands within the city, a vast edifice, very worthy of mention.

100. Next, they read me from a papyrus, the names of three hundred and thirty monarchs,² who (they said) were his successors upon the throne. In this number of generations there were eighteen Ethiopian kings,³ and one queen who was a native; all the rest were kings and Egyptians. The queen bore the same name as the Babylonian princess, namely, Nitocris.⁴ They said that she succeeded her brother; he had been king of Egypt, and was put to death by his subjects, who then placed her upon the throne. Bent on avenging his death, she devised a cunning scheme by which she destroyed a vast number of Egyptians. She constructed a spacious underground chamber, and, on pretence of inaugurating it, contrived the following:—Inviting to a banquet those of the Egyptians whom she knew to have had the chief share in the murder of her brother, she suddenly, as they were feasting, let the river in upon them, by means of a secret duct of large size. This, and this only, did they tell me of her, except that, when she had done as I have said, she threw herself into an apartment full of ashes, that she might escape the vengeance whereto she would otherwise have been exposed.

101. The other kings, they said, were personages of no note or distinction,⁵ and left no monuments of any account, with the exception of the last, who was named Mœris.⁶ He left several memorials of his reign—the northern gateway of the temple of Vulcan, the lake excavated by his orders, whose dimensions I shall give presently,⁷ and the pyramids built by him in the lake, the size of which will be stated when I describe the lake itself wherein they stand. Such were his works: the other kings left absolutely nothing.

102. Passing over these monarchs, therefore, I shall speak of

¹ Neither Menes nor his immediate successors have left any monuments.

² That is, from Menes to Mœris.

³ The intermarriages of the Egyptian and Ethiopian royal families may be inferred from the sculptures.

⁴ The fact of Nitocris having been an early Egyptian queen is proved in her name, Neitakri, occurring in the Turin Papyrus.

⁵ Their obscurity was owing to Egypt being part of the time under the dominion of the Shepherds, who, finding Egypt divided into several kingdoms, or principalities, invaded the country, and succeeded at length in dispossessing the Memphite kings of their territories.

⁶ See chs. 13 and 100.

⁷ *Infra*, ch. 149.

the king who reigned next, whose name was Sesostris.¹ He, the priests said, first of all proceeded in a fleet of ships of war from the Arabian gulf along the shores of the Erythræan sea, subduing the nations as he went, until he finally reached a sea which could not be navigated by reason of the shoals. Hence he returned to Egypt, where, they told me, he collected a vast armament, and made a progress by land across the continent, conquering every people which fell in his way. In the countries where the natives withstood his attack, and fought gallantly for their liberties, he erected pillars,² on which he inscribed his own name and country, and how that he had here reduced the inhabitants to subjection by the might of his arms: where, on the contrary, they submitted readily and without a struggle, he inscribed on the pillars, in addition to these particulars, an emblem to mark that they were a nation of women, that is, unwarlike and effeminate.

103. In this way he traversed the whole continent of Asia, whence he passed on into Europe, and made himself master of Scythia and of Thrace, beyond which countries I do not think that his army extended its march. For thus far the pillars which he erected are still visible, but in the remoter regions they are no longer found. Returning to Egypt from Thrace, he came, on his way, to the banks of the river Phasis. Here I cannot say with any certainty what took place. Either he of his own accord detached a body of troops from his main army and left them to colonise the country, or else a certain number of his soldiers, wearied with their long wanderings, deserted, and established themselves on the banks of this stream.

104. There can be no doubt that the Colchians are an Egyptian race. Before I heard any mention of the fact from others, I had remarked it myself. After the thought had struck me, I made inquiries on the subject both in Colchis and in Egypt, and I found that the Colchians had a more distinct recollection of the Egyptians, than the Egyptians had of them. Still the Egyptians said that they believed the Colchians to be descended from the army of Sesostris. My own conjectures were founded,

¹ The original Sesostris was the first king of the 12th dynasty, Osirtasen I., who was the first great Egyptian conqueror; but when Osirei or Sethi (Sethos), and his son Rameses II. surpassed the exploits of their predecessor, the name of Sesostris became confounded with Sethos, and the conquests of that king, and his still greater son, were ascribed to the original Sesostris.

² These memorials, which belong to Rameses II., are found in Syria, on the rocks above the mouth of the Lycus (now *Nahr el Kelb*).

first, on the fact that they are black-skinned and have woolly hair,¹ which certainly amounts to but little, since several other nations are so too; but further and more especially, on the circumstance that the Colchians, the Egyptians, and the Ethiopians, are the only nations who have practised circumcision from the earliest times. The Phœnicians and the Syrians of Palestine² themselves confess that they learnt the custom of the Egyptians; and the Syrians who dwell about the rivers Thermôdon and Parthenius,³ as well as their neighbours the Macronians, say that they have recently adopted it from the Colchians. Now these are the only nations who use circumcision, and it is plain that they all imitate herein the Egyptians.⁴ With respect to the Ethiopians, indeed, I cannot decide whether they learnt the practice of the Egyptians, or the Egyptians of them—it is undoubtedly of very ancient date in Ethiopia—but that the others derived their knowledge of it from Egypt is clear to me, from the fact that the Phœnicians, when they come to have commerce with the Greeks, cease to follow the Egyptians in this custom, and allow their children to remain uncircumcised.

105. I will add a further proof to the identity of the Egyptians and the Colchians. These two nations weave their linen in exactly the same way, and this is a way entirely unknown to the rest of the world; they also in their whole mode of life and in their language resemble one another. The Colchian linen⁵ is called by the Greeks Sardinian, while that which comes from Egypt is known as Egyptian.

106. The pillars which Sesostris erected in the conquered countries have for the most part disappeared; but in the part of Syria called Palestine, I myself saw them still standing, with the writing above-mentioned, and the emblem distinctly visible.

¹ Herodotus also alludes in ch. 57 to the black colour of the Egyptians; but not only do the paintings pointedly distinguish the Egyptians from the blacks of Africa, and even from the copper-coloured Ethiopians, both of whom are shown to have been of the same hue as their descendants: but the mummies prove that the Egyptians were *neither black nor woolly-haired*, and the formation of the head at once decides that they are of Asiatic, and not of African, origin. Egypt was called Chemi, "black," from the colour of the rich soil, not from that of the people.

² Herodotus apparently alludes to the Jews.

³ The Syrians here intended are undoubtedly the Cappadocians.

⁴ Circumcision was not practised by the Philistines (1 Sam. xiv. 6; xvii. 26; xviii. 27; 2 Sam. i. 20; 1 Chron. x. 4), nor by the generality of the Phœnicians.

⁵ Colchis was famous for its linen.

In Ionia also, there are two representations of this prince engraved upon rocks,¹ one on the road from Ephesus to Phocæa, the other between Sardis and Smyrna. In each case the figure is that of a man, four cubits and a span high, with a spear in his right hand and a bow in his left, the rest of his costume being likewise half Egyptian, half Ethiopian. There is an inscription across the breast from shoulder to shoulder, in the sacred character of Egypt, which says, "With my own shoulders I conquered this land." The conqueror does not tell who he is, or whence he comes, though elsewhere Sesostris records these facts. Hence it has been imagined by some of those who have seen these forms, that they are figures of Memnon;² but such as think so err very widely from the truth.

107. This Sesostris, the priests went on to say, upon his return home, accompanied by vast multitudes of the people whose countries he had subdued,³ was received by his brother,⁴ whom he had made viceroy of Egypt on his departure, at Daphnæ near Pelusium, and invited by him to a banquet, which he attended, together with his sons. Then his brother piled a quantity of wood all round the building, and having so done set it alight. Sesostris, discovering what had happened, took counsel instantly with his wife, who had accompanied him to the feast, and was advised by her to lay two of their six sons upon the fire, and so make a bridge across the flames, whereby the rest might effect their escape. Sesostris did as she recommended, and thus while two of his sons were burnt to death, he himself and his other children were saved.

108. The king then returned to his own land and took ven-

¹ A figure, which seems certainly to be one of the two here mentioned by Herodotus, has been discovered at *Ninfi*, on what appears to have been the ancient road from Sardis to Smyrna.

² Herodotus shows his discrimination in rejecting the notion of his being Memnon, which had already become prevalent among the Greeks, who saw Memnon everywhere in Egypt merely because he was mentioned in Homer. A similar error is made at the present day in expecting to find a reference to Jewish history on the monuments, though it is obviously not the custom of any people to record their misfortunes to posterity in painting or sculpture.

³ It was the custom of the Egyptian kings to bring their prisoners to Egypt, and to employ them in public works, as the sculptures abundantly prove, and as Herodotus states (ch. 108). The Jews were employed in the same way: for though at first they obtained grazing-lands for their cattle in the land of Goshen (Gen. xlv. 34), or the Bucolia, where they tended the king's herds (Gen. xlvii. 6, 27), they were afterwards forced to perform various services, like ordinary prisoners of war.

⁴ This at once shows that the conqueror here mentioned is not the early Sesostris of the 12th dynasty, but the great king of the 19th dynasty.

geance upon his brother, after which he proceeded to make use of the multitudes whom he had brought with him from the conquered countries, partly to drag the huge masses of stone which were moved in the course of his reign to the temple of Vulcan—partly to dig the numerous canals with which the whole of Egypt is intersected. By these forced labours the entire face of the country was changed; for whereas Egypt had formerly been a region suited both for horses and carriages, henceforth it became entirely unfit for either.¹ Though a flat country throughout its whole extent, it is now unfit for either horse or carriage, being cut up by the canals, which are extremely numerous and run in all directions. The king's object was to supply Nile water to the inhabitants of the towns situated in the mid-country, and not lying upon the river; for previously they had been obliged, after the subsidence of the floods, to drink a brackish water which they obtained from wells.²

109. Sesostris also, they declared, made a division of the soil of Egypt among the inhabitants, assigning square plots of ground of equal size to all, and obtaining his chief revenue from the rent which the holders were required to pay him year by year. If the river carried away any portion of a man's lot, he appeared before the king, and related what had happened; upon which the king sent persons to examine, and determine by measurement the exact extent of the loss; and thenceforth only such a rent was demanded of him as was proportionate to the reduced size of his land. From this practice, I think, geometry first came to be known in Egypt, whence it passed into Greece. The sun-dial, however, and the gnomon³ with the division of the day into twelve parts, were received by the Greeks from the Babylonians.

110. Sesostris was king not only of Egypt, but also of Ethiopia. He was the only Egyptian monarch who ever ruled

¹ It is very possible that the number of canals may have increased in the time of Rameses II.: and this, like the rest of Herodotus' account, shows that this king is the Sesostris whose actions he is describing.

² The water filtrates through the alluvial soil to the inland wells, where it is sweet, though sometimes hard.

³ The gnomon was of course part of every dial. Herodotus, however, is correct in making a difference between the *γνώμων* and the *πόλος*. The former, called also *στοιχείον*, was a perpendicular rod, whose shadow indicated noon, and also by its length a particular part of the day, being longest at sunrise and sunset. The *πόλος* was an improvement, and a real dial, on which the division of the day was set off by lines, and indicated by the shadow of its gnomon.

over the latter country.¹ He left, as memorials of his reign, the stone statues which stand in front of the temple of Vulcan, two of which, representing himself and his wife, are thirty cubits in height, while the remaining four, which represent his sons, are twenty cubits. These are the statues, in front of which the priest of Vulcan, very many years afterwards, would not allow Darius the Persian² to place a statue of himself; "because," he said, "Darius had not equalled the achievements of Sesostris the Egyptian: for while Sesostris had subdued to the full as many nations as ever Darius had brought under, he had likewise conquered the Scythians, whom Darius had failed to master. It was not fair, therefore, that he should erect his statue in front of the offerings of a king, whose deeds he had been unable to surpass." Darius, they say, pardoned the freedom of this speech.

III. On the death of Sesostris, his son Pheron, the priests said, mounted the throne. He undertook no warlike expeditions; being struck with blindness, owing to the following circumstance. The river had swollen to the unusual height of eighteen cubits, and had overflowed all the fields, when, a sudden wind arising, the water rose in great waves. Then the king, in a spirit of impious violence, seized his spear, and hurled it into the strong eddies of the stream. Instantly he was smitten with disease of the eyes, from which after a little while he became blind,³ continuing without the power of vision for ten years. At last, in the eleventh year, an oracular announcement reached him from the city of Buto, to the effect, that "the time of his punishment had run out, and he should recover his sight by washing his eyes with urine. He must find a

¹ This cannot apply to any one Egyptian king in particular, as many ruled in Ethiopia; and though Osirtasen I. (the original Sesostris) may have been the *first*, the monuments show that his successors of the 12th dynasty, and others, ruled and erected buildings in Ethiopia. The Egyptians evidently overran all Ethiopia, and part of the interior of Africa, in the time of the 18th and 19th dynasties, and had long before conquered Negro tribes.

² The name of Darius occurs in the sculptures. He seems to have treated the Egyptians with far more uniform lenity than the other Persian kings.

³ This is one of the Greek ciceroni tales. A Greek poet might make a graceful story of Achilles and a Trojan stream, but the prosaic Egyptians would never represent one of their kings performing a feat so opposed to his habits, and to all their religious notions. The story about the women is equally un-Egyptian; but the mention of a remedy which is still used in Egypt for ophthalmia, shows that some simple fact has been converted into a wholly improbable tale.

woman who had been faithful to her husband, and had never preferred to him another man." The king, therefore, first of all made trial of his wife, but to no purpose—he continued as blind as before. So he made the experiment with other women, until at length he succeeded, and in this way recovered his sight. Hereupon he assembled all the women, except the last, and bringing them to the city which now bears the name of Erythrabôlus (Red-soil), he there burnt them all, together with the place itself. The woman to whom he owed his cure, he married, and after his recovery was complete, he presented offerings to all the temples of any note, among which the best worthy of mention are the two stone obelisks which he gave to the temple of the Sun.¹ These are magnificent works; each is made of a single stone, eight cubits broad, and a hundred cubits in height.

112. Pheron, they said, was succeeded by a man of Memphis, whose name, in the language of the Greeks, was Proteus. There is a sacred precinct of this king in Memphis, which is very beautiful, and richly adorned, situated south of the great temple of Vulcan. Phœnicians from the city of Tyre dwell all round this precinct, and the whole place is known by the name of "the camp of the Tyrians." Within the enclosure stands a temple, which is called that of Venus the Stranger.² I conjecture the building to have been erected to Helen, the daughter of Tyndarus; first, because she, as I have heard say, passed some time at the court of Proteus; and secondly, because the temple is dedicated to Venus *the Stranger*; for among all the many temples of Venus there is no other where the goddess bears this title.

113. The priests, in answer to my inquiries on the subject of Helen,³ informed me of the following particulars. When

¹ They were therefore most probably at Heliopolis. The height of 100 cubits, at least 150 feet, far exceeds that of any found in Egypt, the highest being less than 100 feet. The mode of raising an obelisk seems to have been by tilting it from an inclined plane into a pit, at the bottom of which the pedestal was placed to receive it, a wheel or roller of wood being fastened on each side to the end of the obelisk, which enabled it to run down the wall opposite the inclined plane to its proper position. During this operation it was dragged by ropes up the inclined plane, and then gradually lowered into the pit as soon as it had been tilted.

² This was evidently Astarté, the Venus of the Phœnicians and Syrians.

³ The eagerness of the Greeks to "inquire" after events mentioned by Homer, and the readiness of the Egyptians to take advantage of it, are shown in this story related to Herodotus. The fact of Homer having believed that Helen went to Egypt, only proves that the story was not invented in Herodotus' time, but was current long before.

Alexander had carried off Helen from Sparta, he took ship and sailed homewards. On his way across the Egean a gale arose, which drove him from his course and took him down to the sea of Egypt; hence, as the wind did not abate, he was carried on to the coast, when he went ashore, landing at the Salt-Pans, in that mouth of the Nile which is now called the Canobic.¹ At this place there stood upon the shore a temple, which still exists, dedicated to Hercules. If a slave runs away from his master, and taking sanctuary at this shrine gives himself up to the god, and receives certain sacred marks upon his person,² whosoever his master may be, he cannot lay hand on him. This law still remained unchanged to my time. Hearing, therefore, of the custom of the place, the attendants of Alexander deserted him, and fled to the temple, where they sat as suppliants. While there, wishing to damage their master, they accused him to the Egyptians, narrating all the circumstances of the rape of Helen and the wrong done to Menelaus. These charges they brought, not only before the priests, but also before the warden of that mouth of the river, whose name was Thônîs.

114. As soon as he received the intelligence, Thônîs sent a message to Proteus, who was at Memphis, to this effect: "A stranger is arrived from Greece; he is by race a Teucrian, and has done a wicked deed in the country from which he is come. Having beguiled the wife of the man whose guest he was, he carried her away with him, and much treasure also. Compelled by stress of weather, he has now put in here. Are we to let him depart as he came, or shall we seize what he has brought?" Proteus replied, "Seize the man, be he who he may, that has dealt thus wickedly with his friend, and bring him before me, that I may hear what he will say for himself."

115. Thônîs, on receiving these orders, arrested Alexander, and stopped the departure of his ships; then, taking with him Alexander, Helen, the treasures, and also the fugitive slaves, he went up to Memphis. When all were arrived, Proteus asked Alexander, "who he was, and whence he had come?" Alexander replied by giving his descent, the name of his country, and a true account of his late voyage. Then Proteus ques-

¹ This branch of the Nile entered the sea a little to the E. of the town of Canopus, close to Heracleum.

² Showing they were dedicated to the service of the Deity. To set a mark on any one as a protection was a very ancient custom. Cp. Gen. iv. 15.

tioned him as to how he got possession of Helen. In his reply Alexander became confused, and diverged from the truth, whereon the slaves interposed, confuted his statements, and told the whole history of the crime. Finally, Proteus delivered judgment as follows: "Did I not regard it as a matter of the utmost consequence that no stranger driven to my country by adverse winds should ever be put to death, I would certainly have avenged the Greek by slaying thee. Thou basest of men,—after accepting hospitality, to do so wicked a deed! First, thou didst seduce the wife of thy own host—then, not content therewith, thou must violently excite her mind, and steal her away from her husband. Nay, even so thou wert not satisfied, but on leaving, thou must plunder the house in which thou hadst been a guest. Now then, as I think it of the greatest importance to put no stranger to death, I suffer thee to depart; but the woman and the treasures I shall not permit to be carried away. Here they must stay, till the Greek stranger comes in person and takes them back with him. For thyself and thy companions, I command thee to begone from my land within the space of three days—and I warn you, that otherwise at the end of that time you will be treated as enemies."

116. Such was the tale told me by the priests concerning the arrival of Helen at the court of Proteus. It seems to me that Homer was acquainted with this story, and while discarding it, because he thought it less adapted for epic poetry than the version which he followed, showed that it was not unknown to him. This is evident from the travels which he assigns to Alexander in the *Iliad*—and let it be borne in mind that he has nowhere else contradicted himself—making him be carried out of his course on his return with Helen, and after divers wanderings come at last to Sidon¹ in Phœnicia. The passage is in the *Bravery of Diomed*,² and the words are as follows:—

"There were the robes, many-coloured, the work of Sidonian women:
They from Sidon had come, what time god-shaped Alexander
Over the broad sea brought, that way, the high-born Helen."

¹ Herodotus very properly ranks the Sidonians before the Tyrians (viii. 67), and Isaiah calls Tyre daughter of Sidon (xxiii. 12), having been founded by the Sidonians. Sidon is in Genesis (x. 19), but no Tyre; and Homer only mentions Sidon and not "Tyre," as Strabo observes. It may be "doubtful which was the metropolis of Phœnicia," in later times; Sidon, however, appears to be the older city.

² Il. vi. 290-2.

In the *Odyssey* also the same fact is alluded to, in these words:¹—

“Such, so wisely prepared, were the drugs that her stores afforded,
Excellent; gift which once Polydamna, partner of Thônīs,
Gave her in Egypt, where many the simples that grow in the meadows,
Potent to cure in part, in part as potent to injure.”

Menelaus too, in the same poem, thus addresses Telemachus:²—

“Much did I long to return, but the Gods still kept me in Egypt—
Angry because I had failed to pay them their hecatombs duly.”

In these places Homer shows himself acquainted with the voyage of Alexander to Egypt, for Syria borders on Egypt, and the Phœnicians, to whom Sidon belongs, dwell in Syria.

117. From these various passages, and from that about Sidon especially, it is clear that Homer did not write the *Cypria*.³ For there it is said that Alexander arrived at Ilium with Helen on the third day after he left Sparta, the wind having been favourable, and the sea smooth; whereas in the *Iliad*, the poet makes him wander before he brings her home. Enough, however, for the present of Homer and the *Cypria*.

118. I made inquiry of the priests, whether the story which the Greeks tell about Ilium is a fable, or no. In reply they related the following particulars, of which they declared that Menelaus had himself informed them. After the rape of Helen, a vast army of Greeks, wishing to render help to Menelaus, set sail for the Teucrian territory; on their arrival they disembarked, and formed their camp, after which they sent ambassadors to Ilium, of whom Menelaus was one. The embassy was received within the walls, and demanded the restoration of Helen with the treasures which Alexander had carried off, and likewise required satisfaction for the wrong done. The Teucrians gave at once the answer in which they persisted ever afterwards, backing their assertions sometimes even with oaths, to wit, that neither Helen, nor the treasures claimed, were in their possession,—both the one and the other had remained, they said, in Egypt; and it was not just to come upon them for what Proteus, king of Egypt, was detaining. The Greeks, imagining that the Teucrians were merely laughing at them, laid siege to the town, and never rested until they finally took

¹ *Odyss.* iv. 227-230.

² *Ibid.* iv. 351-2.

³ The criticism here is better than the argument. There can be no doubt that Homer was not the author of the rambling epic called “The *Cypria*.”

it. As, however, no Helen was found, and they were still told the same story, they at length believed in its truth, and despatched Menelaus to the court of Proteus.

119. So Menelaus travelled to Egypt, and on his arrival sailed up the river as far as Memphis, and related all that had happened. He met with the utmost hospitality, received Helen back unharmed, and recovered all his treasures. After this friendly treatment Menelaus, they said, behaved most unjustly towards the Egyptians; for as it happened that at the time when he wanted to take his departure, he was detained by the wind being contrary, and as he found this obstruction continue, he had recourse to a most wicked expedient. He seized, they said, two children of the people of the country, and offered them up in sacrifice.¹ When this became known, the indignation of the people was stirred, and they went in pursuit of Menelaus, who, however, escaped with his ships to Libya, after which the Egyptians could not say whither he went. The rest they knew full well, partly by the inquiries which they had made, and partly from the circumstances having taken place in their own land, and therefore not admitting of doubt.

120. Such is the account given by the Egyptian priests, and I am myself inclined to regard as true all that they say of Helen from the following considerations:—If Helen had been at Troy, the inhabitants would, I think, have given her up to the Greeks, whether Alexander consented to it or no. For surely neither Priam, nor his family, could have been so infatuated as to endanger their own persons, their children, and their city, merely that Alexander might possess Helen. At any rate, if they determined to refuse at first, yet afterwards when so many of the Trojans fell on every encounter with the Greeks, and Priam too in each battle lost a son, or sometimes two, or three, or even more, if we may credit the epic poets, I do not believe that even if Priam himself had been married to her he would have declined to deliver her up, with the view of bringing the series of calamities to a close. Nor was it as if Alexander had been heir to the crown, in which case he might have had the

¹ This story recalls the "*Sanguine placâstis ventos, et virgine cæsâ,*" Virg. *Æn.* ii. 116; and Herodotus actually records human sacrifices in Achaia, or Phthiotis (vii. 197). Some have attributed human sacrifices to the Egyptians; and Virgil says "*Quis illaudati nescit Busiridis aras?*" (*Georg.* iii. 5); but it must be quite evident that such a custom was inconsistent with the habits of the civilised Egyptians, and Herodotus has disproved the probability of human sacrifices in Egypt by his judicious remarks in ch. 45.

chief management of affairs, since Priam was already old. Hector, who was his elder brother, and a far braver man, stood before him, and was the heir to the kingdom on the death of their father Priam. And it could not be Hector's interest to uphold his brother in his wrong, when it brought such dire calamities upon himself and the other Trojans. But the fact was that they had no Helen to deliver, and so they told the Greeks, but the Greeks would not believe what they said—Divine Providence, as I think, so willing, that by their utter destruction it might be made evident to all men that when great wrongs are done, the gods will surely visit them with great punishments. Such, at least, is my view of the matter.

121. (1.) When Proteus died, Rhampsinitus,¹ the priests informed me, succeeded to the throne. His monuments were, the western gateway of the temple of Vulcan, and the two statues which stand in front of this gateway, called by the Egyptians, the one Summer, the other Winter, each twenty-five cubits in height. The statue of Summer, which is the northernmost of the two, is worshipped by the natives, and has offerings made to it; that of Winter, which stands towards the south, is treated in exactly the contrary way. King Rhampsinitus was possessed, they said, of great riches in silver,—indeed to such an amount, that none of the princes, his successors, surpassed or even equalled his wealth. For the better custody of this money, he proposed to build a vast chamber of hewn stone, one side of which was to form a part of the outer wall of his palace. The builder, therefore, having designs upon the treasures, contrived, as he was making the building, to insert in this wall a stone, which could easily be removed from its place by two men, or even by one. So the chamber was finished, and the king's money stored away in it. Time passed, and the builder fell sick, when finding his end approaching, he called for his two sons, and related to them the contrivance he had made in the king's treasure-chamber, telling them it was for their sakes he had done it, that so they might always live in affluence. Then he gave them clear directions concerning the mode of removing the stone, and communicated the measurements, bidding them carefully keep the secret, whereby they would be Comp-trollers of the Royal Exchequer so long as they lived. Then the father died, and the sons were not slow in setting to work:

¹ This is evidently the name of a Rameses, and not of a king of an early dynasty.

they went by night to the palace, found the stone in the wall of the building, and having removed it with ease, plundered the treasury of a round sum.

(2.) When the king next paid a visit to the apartment, he was astonished to see that the money was sunk in some of the vessels wherein it was stored away. Whom to accuse, however, he knew not, as the seals were all perfect, and the fastenings of the room secure. Still each time that he repeated his visits, he found that more money was gone. The thieves in truth never stopped, but plundered the treasury ever more and more. At last the king determined to have some traps made, and set near the vessels which contained his wealth. This was done, and when the thieves came, as usual, to the treasure-chamber, and one of them entering through the aperture, made straight for the jars, suddenly he found himself caught in one of the traps. Perceiving that he was lost, he instantly called his brother, and telling him what had happened, entreated him to enter as quickly as possible and cut off his head, that when his body should be discovered it might not be recognised, which would have the effect of bringing ruin upon both. The other thief thought the advice good, and was persuaded to follow it;—then, fitting the stone into its place, he went home, taking with him his brother's head.

(3.) When day dawned, the king came into the room, and marvelled greatly to see the body of the thief in the trap without a head, while the building was still whole, and neither entrance nor exit was to be seen anywhere. In this perplexity he commanded the body of the dead man to be hung up outside the palace wall, and set a guard to watch it, with orders that if any persons were seen weeping or lamenting near the place, they should be seized and brought before him. When the mother heard of this exposure of the corpse of her son, she took it sorely to heart, and spoke to her surviving child, bidding him devise some plan or other to get back the body, and threatening, that if he did not exert himself, she would go herself to the king, and denounce him as the robber.

(4.) The son said all he could to persuade her to let the matter rest, but in vain; she still continued to trouble him, until at last he yielded to her importunity, and contrived as follows:—Filling some skins with wine, he loaded them on donkeys, which he drove before him till he came to the place where the guards were watching the dead body, when pulling

two or three of the skins towards him, he untied some of the necks which dangled by the asses' sides. The wine poured freely out, whereupon he began to beat his head, and shout with all his might, seeming not to know which of the donkeys he should turn to first. When the guards saw the wine running, delighted to profit by the occasion, they rushed one and all into the road, each with some vessel or other, and caught the liquor as it was spilling. The driver pretended anger, and loaded them with abuse; whereon they did their best to pacify him, until at last he appeared to soften, and recover his good humour, drove his asses aside out of the road, and set to work to rearrange their burthens; meanwhile, as he talked and chatted with the guards, one of them began to rally him, and make him laugh, whereupon he gave them one of the skins as a gift. They now made up their minds to sit down and have a drinking-bout where they were, so they begged him to remain and drink with them. Then the man let himself be persuaded, and stayed. As the drinking went on, they grew very friendly together, so presently he gave them another skin, upon which they drank so copiously that they were all overcome with the liquor, and growing drowsy lay down, and fell asleep on the spot. The thief waited till it was the dead of the night, and then took down the body of his brother; after which, in mockery, he shaved off the right side of all the soldiers' beards,¹ and so left them. Laying his brother's body upon the asses, he carried it home to his mother, having thus accomplished the thing that she had required of him.

(5.) When it came to the king's ears that the thief's body was stolen away, he was sorely vexed. Wishing, therefore, whatever it might cost, to catch the man who had contrived the trick, he had recourse (the priests said) to an expedient, which I can scarcely credit. He sent his own daughter² to the

¹ This is a curious mistake for any one to make who had been in Egypt, since the soldiers had no beards, and it was the custom of all classes to shave. This we know from ancient authors, and, above all, from the sculptures, where the only persons who have beards are foreigners. Herodotus even allows that the Egyptians shaved their heads and beards (ch. 36; cp. Gen. xli. 4). Joseph, when sent for from prison by Pharaoh, "shaved himself and changed his raiment." Herodotus could not have learnt this story from the Egyptians, and it is evidently from a Greek source.

² This in a country where social ties were so much regarded, and where the distinction of royal and noble classes was more rigidly maintained than in the most exclusive community of modern Europe, shows that the story was of foreign origin.

common stews, with orders to admit all comers, but to require every man to tell her what was the cleverest and wickedest thing he had done in the whole course of his life. If any one in reply told her the story of the thief, she was to lay hold of him and not allow him to get away. The daughter did as her father willed, whereon the thief, who was well aware of the king's motive, felt a desire to outdo him in craft and cunning. Accordingly he contrived the following plan:—He procured the corpse of a man lately dead, and cutting off one of the arms at the shoulder, put it under his dress, and so went to the king's daughter. When she put the question to him as she had done to all the rest, he replied, that the wickedest thing he had ever done was cutting off the head of his brother when he was caught in a trap in the king's treasury, and the cleverest was making the guards drunk and carrying off the body. As he spoke, the princess caught at him, but the thief took advantage of the darkness to hold out to her the hand of the corpse. Imagining it to be his own hand, she seized and held it fast; while the thief, leaving it in her grasp, made his escape by the door.

(6.) The king, when word was brought him of this fresh success, amazed at the sagacity and boldness of the man, sent messengers to all the towns in his dominions to proclaim a free pardon for the thief, and to promise him a rich reward, if he came and made himself known. The thief took the king at his word, and came boldly into his presence; whereupon Rhampsinitus, greatly admiring him, and looking on him as the most knowing of men, gave him his daughter in marriage. "The Egyptians," he said, "excelled all the rest of the world in wisdom, and this man excelled all other Egyptians."

122. The same king, I was also informed by the priests, afterwards descended alive into the region which the Greeks call Hades,¹ and there played at dice with Ceres, sometimes winning and sometimes suffering defeat. After a while he returned to earth, and brought with him a golden napkin, a gift which he had received from the goddess. From this descent of Rhampsinitus into Hades, and return to earth again, the Egyptians, I was told, instituted a festival, which they certainly celebrated in my day. On what occasion it was that they instituted it, whether upon this or upon any other, I cannot determine. The following are the ceremonies:—On a certain day in the year the

¹ Hades was called in Egyptian Ament or Amenti, over which Osiris presided as judge of the dead.

priests weave a mantle, and binding the eyes of one of their number with a fillet, they put the mantle upon him, and take him with them into the roadway conducting to the temple of Ceres, when they depart and leave him to himself. Then the priest, thus blindfolded, is led (they say) by two wolves to the temple of Ceres, distant twenty furlongs from the city, where he stays awhile, after which he is brought back from the temple by the wolves, and left upon the spot where they first joined him.

123. Such as think the tales told by the Egyptians credible are free to accept them for history. For my own part, I propose to myself throughout my whole work faithfully to record the traditions of the several nations. The Egyptians maintain that Ceres and Bacchus preside in the realms below. They were also the first to broach the opinion, that the soul of man is immortal,¹ and that, when the body dies, it enters into the form of an animal² which is born at the moment, thence passing on from one animal into another, until it has circled through the forms of all the creatures which tenant the earth, the water, and the air, after which it enters again into a human frame, and is born anew. The whole period of the transmigration is (they say) three thousand years. There are Greek writers, some of an earlier, some of a later date,³ who have borrowed this doctrine from the Egyptians, and put it forward as their own. I could mention their names, but I abstain from doing so.

124. Till the death of Rhampsinitus, the priests said, Egypt was excellently governed, and flourished greatly; but after him Cheops succeeded to the throne, and plunged into all manner of wickedness. He closed the temples, and forbade the Egyptians to offer sacrifice, compelling them instead to labour, one and all, in his service. Some were required to drag blocks of stone down to the Nile from the quarries in the Arabian range of hills; others received the blocks after they had been conveyed in boats across the river, and drew them to the range of

¹ This was the great doctrine of the Egyptians, and their belief in it is everywhere proclaimed in the paintings of the tombs. But the souls of wicked men alone appear to have suffered the disgrace of entering the body of an animal, when, "weighed in the balance" before the tribunal of Osiris, they were pronounced unworthy to enter the abode of the blessed.

² [As a matter of fact we can find no trace in Egyptian religion of this doctrine of "metempsychosis,"—at least in the form in which Herodotus gives it.—E. H. B.]

³ Pythagoras is supposed to be included among the later writers. Herodotus, with more judgment and fairness, and on better information, than some modern writers, allows that the Greeks borrowed their early lessons of philosophy and science from Egypt.

hills called the Libyan.¹ A hundred thousand men laboured constantly, and were relieved every three months by a fresh lot. It took ten years' oppression of the people to make the causeway² for the conveyance of the stones, a work not much inferior, in my judgment, to the pyramid itself. This causeway is five furlongs in length, ten fathoms wide, and in height, at the highest part, eight fathoms. It is built of polished stone, and is covered with carvings of animals. To make it took ten years, as I said—or rather to make the causeway, the works on the mound³ where the pyramid stands, and the underground chambers, which Cheops intended as vaults for his own use: these last were built on a sort of island, surrounded by water introduced from the Nile by a canal.⁴ The Pyramid itself was twenty years in building. It is a square, eight hundred feet each way,⁵ and the height the same, built entirely of polished stone, fitted together with the utmost care. The stones of which it is composed are none of them less than thirty feet in length.⁶

125. The pyramid was built in steps,⁷ battlement-wise, as it is called, or, according to others, altar-wise. After laying the stones for the base, they raised the remaining stones to their

¹ The western hills being specially appropriated to tombs in all the places where pyramids were built will account for these monuments being on that side of the Nile. The abode of the dead was supposed to be the West, the land of darkness where the sun ended his course.

² The remains of two causeways still exist—the northern one, which is the largest, corresponding with the great pyramid, as the other does with the third.

³ This was levelling the top of the hill to form a platform. A piece of rock was also left in the centre as a nucleus on which the pyramid was built.

⁴ There is no trace of a canal, nor is there any probability of its having existed.

⁵ The dimensions of the great pyramid were—each face, 756 ft., now reduced to 732 ft.; original height when entire, 480 ft. 9 in., now 460 ft. 9 in.; angles at the base, $51^{\circ} 50'$; angle at the apex, $76^{\circ} 20'$; it covered an area of 571,536 square feet, now 535,824 square feet. Herodotus' measurement of eight plethra, or 800 ft., for each face, is not very far from the truth as a round number; but the height, which he says was the same, is far from correct.

⁶ The size of the stones varies. Herodotus alludes to those of the outer surface, which are now gone.

⁷ These steps, or successive stages, had their faces nearly perpendicular, or at an angle of about 75° , and the triangular space, formed by each projecting considerably beyond the one immediately above it, was afterwards filled in, thus completing the general form of the pyramid. It is a curious question if the Egyptians brought with them the idea of the pyramid, or sepulchral mound, when they migrated into the valley of the Nile, and if it originated in the same idea as the tower, built also in stages, of Assyria, and the pagoda of India.

places by means of machines¹ formed of short wooden planks. The first machine raised them from the ground to the top of the first step. On this there was another machine, which received the stone upon its arrival, and conveyed it to the second step, whence a third machine advanced it still higher. Either they had as many machines as there were steps in the pyramid, or possibly they had but a single machine, which, being easily moved, was transferred from tier to tier as the stone rose—both accounts are given, and therefore I mention both. The upper portion of the pyramid was finished first, then the middle, and finally the part which was lowest and nearest the ground. There is an inscription in Egyptian characters² on the pyramid which records the quantity of radishes, onions, and garlick consumed by the labourers who constructed it; and I perfectly well remember that the interpreter who read the writing to me said that the money expended in this way was 1600 talents of silver. If this then is a true record, what a vast sum must have been spent on the iron tools³ used in the work, and on the feeding and clothing of the labourers, considering the length of time the work lasted, which has already been stated, and the additional time—no small space, I imagine—which must have been occupied by the quarrying of the stones, their conveyance, and the formation of the underground apartments.

126. The wickedness of Cheops reached to such a pitch that, when he had spent all his treasures and wanted more, he sent his daughter to the stews, with orders to procure him a certain sum—how much I cannot say, for I was not told; she procured it, however, and at the same time, bent on leaving a monument which should perpetuate her own memory, she required each man to make her a present of a stone towards the works which she contemplated. With these stones she built the pyramid which stands midmost of the three that are in front of the great pyramid, measuring along each side a hundred and fifty feet.⁴

¹ The notion of Diodorus that machines were not yet invented is sufficiently disproved by common sense and by the assertion of Herodotus. The position of these pyramids is very remarkable in being placed so exactly facing the four cardinal points that the variation of the compass may be ascertained from them. This accuracy would imply some astronomical knowledge and careful observations at that time.

² This must have been in hieroglyphics, the monumental character. The outer stones being gone, it is impossible to verify, or disprove, the assertion of Herodotus.

³ Iron was known in Egypt at a very early time.

⁴ The story of the daughter of Cheops is on a par with that of the daughter of Rhampsinitus; and we may be certain that Herodotus never received

127. Cheops reigned, the Egyptians said, fifty years, and was succeeded at his demise by Chephren, his brother.

Chephren imitated the conduct of his predecessor, and, like him, built a pyramid, which did not, however, equal the dimensions of his brother's. Of this I am certain, for I measured them both myself.¹ It has no subterraneous apartments, nor any canal from the Nile to supply it with water, as the other pyramid has. In that, the Nile water, introduced through an artificial duct, surrounds an island, where the body of Cheops is said to lie. Chephren built his pyramid close to the great pyramid of Cheops, and of the same dimensions, except that he lowered the height forty feet. For the basement he employed the many-coloured stone of Ethiopia.² These two pyramids stand both on the same hill, an elevation not far short of a hundred feet in height. The reign of Chephren lasted fifty-six years.

128. Thus the affliction of Egypt endured for the space of one hundred and six years, during the whole of which time the temples were shut up and never opened. The Egyptians so detest the memory of these kings that they do not much like even to mention their names. Hence they commonly call the pyramids after Philiton,³ a shepherd who at that time fed his flocks about the place.

129. After Chephren, Mycerinus (they said), son of Cheops, ascended the throne. This prince disapproved the conduct of his father, re-opened the temples, and allowed the people, who it from "the priests," whose language he did not understand, but from some of the Greek "interpreters," by whom he was so often misled.

¹ The measurements of the Second Pyramid are:—present base, 690 ft.; former base (according to Colonel Howard Vyse), 707 ft. 9 in.; present perpendicular height (calculating the angle $52^{\circ} 20'$), 446 ft. 9 in.; former height, 454 ft. 3 in. Herodotus supposes it was 40 feet less in height than the Great Pyramid, but the real difference was only 24 ft. 6 in. It is singular that Herodotus takes no notice of the sphinx, which was made at least as early as the 18th dynasty, as it bears the name of Thothmes IV.

² This was red granite of Syene; and Herodotus appears to be correct in saying that the lower tier was of that stone, or at least the casing, which was all that he could see; and the numbers of fragments of granite lying about this pyramid show that it has been partly faced with it. The casing which remains on the upper part is of the limestone of the eastern hills. All the pyramids were opened by the Arab caliphs in the hopes of finding treasure.

³ This can have no connection with the invasion, or the memory, of the Shepherd-kings, at least as founders of the pyramids, for those monuments were raised long before the rule of the Shepherd-kings in Egypt. In the mind of the Egyptians two periods of oppression may have gradually come to be confounded, and they may have ascribed to the tyranny of the Shepherd-kings what in reality belonged to a far earlier time of misrule.

were ground down to the lowest point of misery, to return to their occupations, and to resume the practice of sacrifice. His justice in the decision of causes was beyond that of all the former kings. The Egyptians praise him in this respect more highly than any of their other monarchs, declaring that he not only gave his judgments with fairness, but also, when any one was dissatisfied with his sentence, made compensation to him out of his own purse, and thus pacified his anger. Mycerinus had established his character for mildness, and was acting as I have described, when the stroke of calamity fell on him. First of all his daughter died, the only child that he possessed. Experiencing a bitter grief at this visitation, in his sorrow he conceived the wish to entomb his child in some unusual way. He therefore caused a cow to be made of wood, and after the interior had been hollowed out, he had the whole surface coated with gold; and in this novel tomb laid the dead body of his daughter.

130. The cow was not placed under ground, but continued visible to my times: it was at Saïs, in the royal palace, where it occupied a chamber richly adorned. Every day there are burnt before it aromatics of every kind; and all night long a lamp is kept burning in the apartment. In an adjoining chamber are statues which the priests at Saïs declared to represent the various concubines of Mycerinus. They are colossal figures in wood, of the number of about twenty, and are represented naked. Whose images they really are, I cannot say—I can only repeat the account which was given to me.

131. Concerning these colossal figures and the sacred cow, there is also another tale narrated, which runs thus: "Mycerinus was enamoured of his daughter, and offered her violence—the damsel for grief hanged herself, and Mycerinus entombed her in the cow. Then her mother cut off the hands of all her tiring-maids, because they had sided with the father, and betrayed the child; and so the statues of the maids have no hands." All this is mere fable in my judgment, especially what is said about the hands of the colossal statues. I could plainly see that the figures had only lost their hands through the effect of time. They had dropped off, and were still lying on the ground about the feet of the statues.

132. As for the cow, the greater portion of it is hidden by a scarlet coverture; the head and neck, however, which are visible, are coated very thickly with gold, and between the

horns there is a representation in gold of the orb of the sun. The figure is not erect, but lying down, with the limbs under the body; the dimensions being fully those of a large animal of the kind. Every year it is taken from the apartment where it is kept, and exposed to the light of day—this is done at the season when the Egyptians beat themselves in honour of one of their gods, whose name I am unwilling to mention in connection with such a matter.¹ They say that the daughter of Mycerinus requested her father in her dying moments to allow her once a year to see the sun.

133. After the death of his daughter, Mycerinus was visited with a second calamity, of which I shall now proceed to give an account. An oracle reached him from the town of Buto, which said, "Six years only shalt thou live upon the earth, and in the seventh thou shalt end thy days." Mycerinus, indignant, sent an angry message to the oracle, reproaching the god with his injustice—"My father and uncle," he said, "though they shut up the temples, took no thought of the gods, and destroyed multitudes of men, nevertheless enjoyed a long life; I, who am pious, am to die so soon!" There came in reply a second message from the oracle—"For this very reason is thy life brought so quickly to a close—thou hast not done as it behoved thee. Egypt was fated to suffer affliction one hundred and fifty years—the two kings who preceded thee upon the throne understood this—thou hast not understood it." Mycerinus, when this answer reached him, perceiving that his doom was fixed, had lamps prepared, which he lighted every day at eventime, and feasted and enjoyed himself unceasingly both day and night, moving about in the marsh-country and the woods, and visiting all the places that he heard were agreeable sojourns. His wish was to prove the oracle false, by turning the nights into days, and so living twelve years in the space of six.

134. He too left a pyramid, but much inferior in size to his father's. It is a square, each side of which falls short of three plethra by twenty feet, and is built for half its height of the stone of Ethiopia. Some of the Greeks call it the work of Rhodôpis the courtesan, but they report falsely. It seems to me that these persons cannot have any real knowledge who Rhodôpis was; otherwise they would scarcely have ascribed to her a work on which uncounted treasures, so to speak, must have been expended. Rhodôpis also lived during the reign of

¹ This was Osiris.

Amasis, not of Mycerinus, and was thus very many years later than the time of the kings who built the pyramids. She was a Thracian by birth, and was the slave of Iadmon, son of Hephæstopolis, a Samian. Æsop, the fable-writer, was one of her fellow-slaves. That Æsop belonged to Iadmon is proved by many facts—among others, by this. When the Delphians, in obedience to the command of the oracle, made proclamation that if any one claimed compensation for the murder of Æsop he should receive it, the person who at last came forward was Iadmon, grandson of the former Iadmon, and he received the compensation. Æsop therefore must certainly have been the former Iadmon's slave.

135. Rhodôpis really arrived in Egypt under the conduct of Xantheus the Samian; she was brought there to exercise her trade, but was redeemed for a vast sum by Charaxus, a Mytilenæan, the son of Scamandrônymus, and brother of Sappho the poetess.¹ After thus obtaining her freedom, she remained in Egypt, and, as she was very beautiful, amassed great wealth, for a person in her condition; not, however, enough to enable her to erect such a work as this pyramid. Any one who likes may go and see to what the tenth part of her wealth amounted, and he will thereby learn that her riches must not be imagined to have been very wonderfully great. Wishing to leave a memorial of herself in Greece, she determined to have something made the like of which was not to be found in any temple, and to offer it at the shrine at Delphi. So she set apart a tenth of her possessions, and purchased with the money a quantity of iron spits, such as are fit for roasting oxen whole, whereof she made a present to the oracle. They are still to be seen there, lying of a heap, behind the altar which the Chians dedicated, opposite the sanctuary. Naucratis seems somehow to be the place where such women are most attractive. First there was this Rhodôpis of whom we have been speaking, so celebrated a person that her name came to be familiar to all the Greeks; and, afterwards, there was another, called Archidicé, notorious throughout Greece, though not so much talked of as her predecessor. Charaxus, after ransoming Rhodôpis, returned to Mytilene, and was often lashed by Sappho in her poetry. But enough has been said on the subject of this courtesan.

¹ Charaxus, the brother of Sappho, traded in wine from Lesbos, which he was in the habit of taking to Naucratis, the entrepot of all Greek merchandise.

136. After Mycerinus, the priests said, Asychis¹ ascended the throne. He built the eastern gateway² of the temple of Vulcan, which in size and beauty far surpasses the other three. All the four gateways have figures graven on them, and a vast amount of architectural ornament, but the gateway of Asychis is by far the most richly adorned. In the reign of this king, money being scarce and commercial dealings straitened, a law was passed that the borrower might pledge his father's body to raise the sum whereof he had need. A proviso was appended to this law, giving the lender authority over the entire sepulchre of the borrower, so that a man who took up money under this pledge, if he died without paying the debt, could not obtain burial either in his own ancestral tomb, or in any other, nor could he during his lifetime bury in his own tomb any member of his family. The same king, desirous of eclipsing all his predecessors upon the throne, left as a monument of his reign a pyramid of brick.³ It bears an inscription, cut in stone, which runs thus:—"Despise me not in comparison with the stone pyramids; for I surpass them all, as much as Jove surpasses the other gods. A pole was plunged into a lake, and the mud which clave thereto was gathered; and bricks were made of the mud, and so I was formed." Such were the chief actions of this prince.

137. He was succeeded on the throne, they said, by a blind man, a native of Anysis, whose own name also was Anysis. Under him Egypt was invaded by a vast army of Ethiopians, led by Sabacôs,⁴ their king. The blind Anysis fled away to the marsh-country, and the Ethiopian was lord of the land for fifty years, during which his mode of rule was the following:—When

¹ It is probable that he was Shishak, of the 22nd dynasty.

² The lofty pyramidal towers forming the façades of the courts, or vestibules, of the temple.

³ The use of crude brick was general in Egypt, for dwelling-houses, tombs, and ordinary buildings, the walls of towns, fortresses, and of the sacred enclosures of temples, and for all purposes where stone was not required, which last was nearly confined to temples, quays, and reservoirs. Even some small ancient temples were of crude bricks, which were merely baked in the sun, and never burnt in early Pharaonic times. A great number of people were employed in this extensive manufacture; it was an occupation to which many prisoners of war were condemned, who, like the Jews, worked for the king, bricks being a government monopoly.

⁴ Herodotus mentions only one Sabaco, but the monuments and Manetho notice two, the Sabakôn and Sebichôs (Sevêchos) of Manetho, called Shebek in the hieroglyphics. One of these is the same as So (Savá), the contemporary of Hosea, King of Israel, who is said (in 2 Kings xvii. 4) to have made a treaty with the King of Egypt, and to have refused the annual tribute to Shalmanezzer, King of Assyria.

an Egyptian was guilty of an offence, his plan was not to punish him with death: instead of so doing, he sentenced him, according to the nature of his crime, to raise the ground to a greater or a less extent in the neighbourhood of the city to which he belonged. Thus the cities came to be even more elevated than they were before. As early as the time of Sesostris, they had been raised by those who dug the canals in his reign; this second elevation of the soil under the Ethiopian king gave them a very lofty position. Among the many cities which thus attained to a great elevation, none (I think) was raised so much as the town called Bubastis, where there is a temple of the goddess Bubastis, which well deserves to be described. Other temples may be grander, and may have cost more in the building, but there is none so pleasant to the eye as this of Bubastis. The Bubastis of the Egyptians is the same as the Artemis (Diana) of the Greeks.

138. The following is a description of this edifice:¹—Excepting the entrance, the whole forms an island. Two artificial channels from the Nile, one on either side of the temple, encompass the building, leaving only a narrow passage by which it is approached. These channels are each a hundred feet wide, and are thickly shaded with trees. The gateway is sixty feet in height, and is ornamented with figures cut upon the stone, six cubits high and well worthy of notice. The temple stands in the middle of the city, and is visible on all sides as one walks round it; for as the city has been raised up by embankment, while the temple has been left untouched in its original condition, you look down upon it wheresoever you are. A low wall runs round the enclosure, having figures engraved upon it, and inside there is a grove of beautiful tall trees growing round the shrine, which contains the image of the goddess. The enclosure is a furlong in length, and the same in breadth. The entrance to it is by a road paved with stone for a distance of about three furlongs, which passes straight through the market-place with an easterly direction, and is about four hundred feet in width. Trees of an extraordinary height grow on each side the road, which conducts from the temple of Bubastis to that of Mercury.

139. The Ethiopian finally quitted Egypt, the priests said,

¹ This account of the position of the temple of Bubastis is very accurate. The height of the mound, the site of the temple in a low space beneath the houses, from which you look down upon it, are the very peculiarities any one would remark on visiting the remains at Tel Basta.

by a hasty flight under the following circumstances. He saw in his sleep a vision:—a man stood by his side, and counselled him to gather together all the priests of Egypt and cut every one of them asunder. On this, according to the account which he himself gave, it came into his mind that the gods intended hereby to lead him to commit an act of sacrilege, which would be sure to draw down upon him some punishment either at the hands of gods or men. So he resolved not to do the deed suggested to him, but rather to retire from Egypt, as the time during which it was fated that he should hold the country had now (he thought) expired. For before he left Ethiopia he had been told by the oracles which are venerated there, that he was to reign fifty years over Egypt. The years were now fled, and the dream had come to trouble him; he therefore of his own accord withdrew from the land.

140. As soon as Sabacôs was gone, the blind king left the marshes, and resumed the government. He had lived in the marsh-region the whole time, having formed for himself an island there by a mixture of earth and ashes. While he remained, the natives had orders to bring him food unbeknown to the Ethiopian, and latterly, at his request, each man had brought him, with the food, a certain quantity of ashes. Before Amyrtæus,¹ no one was able to discover the site of this island,² which continued unknown to the kings of Egypt who preceded him on the throne for the space of seven hundred years and more.³ The name which it bears is Elbo. It is about ten furlongs across in each direction.

141. The next king, I was told, was a priest of Vulcan, called Sethôs. This monarch despised and neglected the warrior class of the Egyptians, as though he did not need their services. Among other indignities which he offered them, he took from them the lands which they had possessed under all the previous kings, consisting of twelve acres of choice land for each warrior. Afterwards, therefore, when Sanacharib, king of the Arabians⁴

¹ See Book iii. ch. 17.

² This island appears to have stood at the S.E. corner of the lake of Buto.

³ Niebuhr proposes to read 300 for 700 (T or T̄ for Ψ), remarking that these signs are often confounded. It certainly does seem almost incredible that Herodotus should have committed the gross chronological error involved in the text as it stands, especially as his date for Psammetichus is so nearly correct.

⁴ It is curious to find Sennacherib called the “king of the Arabians and Assyrians”—an order of words which seems even to regard him as *rather* an Arabian than an Assyrian king. In the same spirit his army is termed

and Assyrians, marched his vast army into Egypt, the warriors one and all refused to come to his aid. On this the monarch, greatly distressed, entered into the inner sanctuary, and, before the image of the god, bewailed the fate which impended over him. As he wept he fell asleep, and dreamed that the god came and stood at his side, bidding him be of good cheer, and go boldly forth to meet the Arabian host, which would do him no hurt, as he himself would send those who should help him. Sethôs, then, relying on the dream, collected such of the Egyptians as were willing to follow him, who were none of them warriors, but traders, artisans, and market people; and with these marched to Pelusium, which commands the entrance into Egypt, and there pitched his camp. As the two armies lay here opposite one another, there came in the night a multitude of field-mice, which devoured all the quivers and bowstrings of the enemy, and ate the thongs by which they managed their shields. Next morning they commenced their flight, and great multitudes fell, as they had no arms with which to defend themselves. There stands to this day in the temple of Vulcan, a stone statue of Sethôs, with a mouse in his hand,¹ and an inscription to this effect—"Look on me, and learn to reverence the gods."

142. Thus far I have spoken on the authority of the Egyptians and their priests. They declare that from their first king to this last-mentioned monarch, the priest of Vulcan, was a period of three hundred and forty-one generations; such, at least, they say, was the number both of their kings, and of their high-priests, during this interval. Now three hundred genera-

afterwards "the Arabian host." It is impossible altogether to defend the view which Herodotus here discloses, but we may understand how such a mistake was possible, if we remember how Arabians were mixed up with other races in Lower Mesopotamia and what an extensive influence a great Assyrian king would exercise over the tribes of the desert, especially those bordering on Mesopotamia. The ethnic connection of the two great Semitic races would render union between them comparatively easy; and so we find Arabian kings at one time paramount over Assyria, while now apparently the case was reversed, and an Assyrian prince bore sway over some considerable number of the Arab tribes.

¹ If any particular reverence was paid to mice at Memphis, it probably arose from some other mysterious reason. They were emblems of the generating and perhaps of the producing principle; and some thought them to be endued with prophetic power (a merit attributed now in some degree to rats on certain occasions). The people of Troas are said to have revered mice "because they gnawed the bowstrings of their enemies," and Apollo, who was called Smintheus (from *σμήθος*, a "mouse"), was represented on coins of Alexandria Troas with a mouse in his hand.

tions of men make ten thousand years, three generations filling up the century; and the remaining forty-one generations make thirteen hundred and forty years. Thus the whole number of years is eleven thousand, three hundred and forty; in which entire space, they said, no god had ever appeared in a human form; nothing of this kind had happened either under the former or under the later Egyptian kings. The sun, however, had within this period of time, on four several occasions, moved from his wonted course, twice rising where he now sets, and twice setting where he now rises. Egypt was in no degree affected by these changes; the productions of the land, and of the river, remained the same; nor was there anything unusual either in the diseases or the deaths.

143. When Hecatæus the historian¹ was at Thebes, and, discoursing of his genealogy, traced his descent to a god in the person of his sixteenth ancestor, the priests of Jupiter did to him exactly as they afterwards did to me, though I made no boast of my family. They led me into the inner sanctuary, which is a spacious chamber, and showed me a multitude of colossal statues, in wood, which they counted up, and found to amount to the exact number they had said; the custom being for every high-priest during his lifetime to set up his statue in the temple. As they showed me the figures and reckoned them up, they assured me that each was the son of the one preceding him; and this they repeated throughout the whole line, beginning with the representation of the priest last deceased, and continuing till they had completed the series. When Hecatæus, in giving his genealogy, mentioned a god as his sixteenth ancestor, the priests opposed their genealogy to his, going through this list, and refusing to allow that any man was ever born of a god. Their colossal figures were each, they said, a Pirômis, born of a Pirômis, and the number of them was three hundred and forty-five; through the whole series Pirômis

¹ This is the first distinct mention of Hecatæus, who has been glanced at more than once. (Vide supra, chs. 21, 23.) He had flourished from about B.C. 520 to B.C. 475, and had done far more than any other writer to pave the way for Herodotus. His works were of two kinds, geographical and historical. Under the former head he wrote a description of the known world (*Τῆς περὶ τοὺς ἄλλους*), chiefly the result of his own travels, which must have been of considerable service to our author. Under the latter he wrote his genealogies, which were for the most part mythical, but contained occasionally important history (vide infra, vi. 137). The political influence of Hecatæus is noticed by Herodotus in two passages (v. 35, 125). He is the only prose-writer whom Herodotus mentions by name.

followed Pirômis, and the line did not run up either to a god or a hero. The word *Pirômis* may be rendered "gentleman."

144. Of such a nature were, they said, the beings represented by these images—they were very far indeed from being gods. However, in the times anterior to them it was otherwise; then Egypt had gods for its rulers, who dwelt upon the earth with men, one being always supreme above the rest. The last of these was Horus, the son of Osiris, called by the Greeks Apollo. He deposed Typhon,¹ and ruled over Egypt as its last god-king. Osiris is named Dionysus (Bacchus) by the Greeks.

145. The Greeks regard Hercules, Bacchus, and Pan as the youngest of the gods. With the Egyptians, contrariwise, Pan is exceedingly ancient, and belongs to those whom they call "the eight gods," who existed before the rest. Hercules is one of the gods of the second order, who are known as "the twelve;" and Bacchus belongs to the gods of the third order, whom the twelve produced. I have already mentioned how many years intervened according to the Egyptians between the birth of Hercules and the reign of Amasis.² From Pan to this period they count a still longer time; and even from Bacchus, who is the youngest of the three, they reckon fifteen thousand years to the reign of that king. In these matters they say they cannot be mistaken, as they have always kept count of the years, and noted them in their registers. But from the present day to the time of Bacchus, the reputed son of Semelé, daughter of Cadmus, is a period of not more than sixteen hundred years; to that of Hercules, son of Alcmena, is about nine hundred; while to the time of Pan, son of Penelopé (Pan, according to the Greeks, was her child by Mercury), is a shorter space than to the Trojan war, eight hundred years or thereabouts.

146. It is open to all to receive whichever he may prefer of these two traditions; my own opinion about them has been already declared. If indeed these gods had been publicly known, and had grown old in Greece, as was the case with Hercules, son of Amphitryon, Bacchus, son of Semelé, and Pan, son of Penelopé, it might have been said that the last-mentioned personages were men who bore the names of certain previously existing deities. But Bacchus, according to the Greek tradition, was no sooner born than he was sewn up in Jupiter's thigh, and

¹ Typhon, or rather Seth, the brother of Osiris, was the abstract idea of "evil," as Osiris was of "good."

² Supra, ch. 43.

carried off to Nysa, above Egypt, in Ethiopia; and as to Pan, they do not even profess to know what happened to him after his birth. To me, therefore, it is quite manifest that the names of these gods became known to the Greeks after those of their other deities, and that they count their birth from the time when they first acquired a knowledge of them. Thus far my narrative rests on the accounts given by the Egyptians.

147. In what follows I have the authority, not of the Egyptians only, but of others also who agree with them. I shall speak likewise in part from my own observation. When the Egyptians regained their liberty after the reign of the priest of Vulcan, unable to continue any while without a king, they divided Egypt into twelve districts, and set twelve kings over them. These twelve kings, united together by intermarriages, ruled Egypt in peace, having entered into engagements with one another not to depose any of their number, nor to aim at any aggrandisement of one above the rest, but to dwell together in perfect amity. Now the reason why they made these stipulations, and guarded with care against their infraction, was, because at the very first establishment of the twelve kingdoms, an oracle had declared—"That he among them who should pour in Vulcan's temple a libation from a cup of bronze, would become monarch of the whole land of Egypt." Now the twelve held their meetings at all the temples.

148. To bind themselves yet more closely together, it seemed good to them to leave a common monument. In pursuance of this resolution they made the Labyrinth which lies a little above Lake Mœris, in the neighbourhood of the place called the city of Crocodiles.¹ I visited this place, and found it to surpass description; for if all the walls and other great works of the Greeks could be put together in one, they would not equal, either for labour or expense, this Labyrinth;² and yet the temple of Ephesus is a building worthy of note,³ and so is the temple of

¹ Afterwards called Arsinoë, from the wife and sister of Ptolemy Philadelphus, like the port on the Red Sea (now Suez).

² The admiration expressed by Herodotus for the Labyrinth is singular, when there were so many far more magnificent buildings at Thebes, of which he takes no notice. It was probably the beauty of the stone, the richness of its decoration, and the peculiarity of its plan that struck him so much.

³ The original temple of Diana at Ephesus seems to have been destroyed by the Cimmerians. The temple which Herodotus saw was then begun to be built by Chersiphron of Cnossus and his son Metagenes. These architects did not live to complete their work, which was finished by Demetrius and Peonius of Ephesus, the rebuilder of the temple of Apollo

Samos.¹ ✓ The pyramids likewise surpass description, and are severally equal to a number of the greatest works of the Greeks, but the Labyrinth surpasses the pyramids. It has twelve courts, all of them roofed, with gates exactly opposite one another, six looking to the north, and six to the south. A single wall surrounds the entire building. There are two different sorts of chambers throughout—half under ground, half above ground, the latter built upon the former; the whole number of these chambers is three thousand, fifteen hundred of each kind. The upper chambers I myself passed through and saw, and what I say concerning them is from my own observation; of the underground chambers I can only speak from report: for the keepers of the building could not be got to show them, since they contained (as they said) the sepulchres of the kings who built the Labyrinth, and also those of the sacred crocodiles. Thus it is from hearsay only that I can speak of the lower chambers. The upper chambers, however, I saw with my own eyes, and found them to excel all other human productions; for the passages through the houses, and the varied windings of the paths across the courts, excited in me infinite admiration, as I passed from the courts into chambers, and from the chambers into colonnades, and from the colonnades into fresh houses, and again from these into courts unseen before. The roof was throughout of stone, like the walls; and the walls were carved all over with figures; every court was surrounded with a colonnade, which was built of white stones, exquisitely fitted together. At the corner of the Labyrinth stands a pyramid, forty fathoms high, with large figures engraved on it; which is entered by a subterranean passage.

149. Wonderful as is the Labyrinth, the work called the Lake of Mœris, which is close by the Labyrinth, is yet more astonishing. The measure of its circumference is sixty schoenes, or three thousand six hundred furlongs, which is equal to the entire length of Egypt along the sea-coast. The lake stretches in its longest direction from north to south, and in its deepest parts is of the depth of fifty fathoms. It is manifestly an artificial excavation, for nearly in the centre there stand two pyramids,² rising to the height of fifty fathoms above the surface at Branchidæ. The architecture of the temple of Chersiphron was Ionic. After its destruction by Eratosthratus in the year of Alexander's birth, the temple of Diana was rebuilt with greater magnificence, and probably on a larger scale, than before.

¹ Vide infra, iii. 60.

² No traces remain of these pyramids.

of the water, and extending as far beneath, crowned each of them with a colossal statue sitting upon a throne. Thus these pyramids are one hundred fathoms high, which is exactly a furlong (stadium) of six hundred feet: the fathom being six feet in length, or four cubits, which is the same thing, since a cubit measures six, and a foot four, palms. The water of the lake does not come out of the ground, which is here excessively dry,¹ but is introduced by a canal from the Nile. The current sets for six months into the lake from the river, and for the next six months into the river from the lake. While it runs outward it returns a talent of silver daily to the royal treasury from the fish that are taken,² but when the current is the other way the return sinks to one-third of that sum.

150. The natives told me that there was a subterranean passage from this lake to the Libyan Syrtis, running westward into the interior by the hills above Memphis. As I could not anywhere see the earth which had been taken out when the excavation was made, and I was curious to know what had become of it, I asked the Egyptians who live closest to the lake where the earth had been put. The answer that they gave me I readily accepted as true, since I had heard of the same thing being done at Nineveh of the Assyrians. There, once upon a time, certain thieves, having formed a plan to get into their possession the vast treasures of Sardanapalus, the Ninevite king, which were laid up in subterranean treasuries, proceeded to tunnel a passage from the house where they lived into the royal palace, calculating the distance and the direction. At nightfall they took the earth from the excavation and carried it to the river Tigris, which ran by Nineveh, continuing to get rid of it in this manner until they had accomplished their purpose. It was exactly in the same way that the Egyptians disposed of the mould from their excavation, except that they did it by day and not by night; for as fast as the earth was dug, they carried it to the Nile, which they knew would disperse it far and wide. Such was the account which I received of the formation of this lake.

¹ This is the nature of the basin on which the alluvial soil has been deposited; but it resembles the whole valley of the Nile in being destitute of springs, which are only met with in two or three places. The wells are all formed by the filtration of water from the river.

² A great quantity of fish is caught even at the present day at the mouths of the canals, when they are closed and the water is prevented from returning to the Nile.

151. The twelve kings for some time dealt honourably by one another, but at length it happened that on a certain occasion, when they had met to worship in the temple of Vulcan, the high-priest on the last day of the festival, in bringing forth the golden goblets from which they were wont to pour the libations, mistook the number, and brought eleven goblets only for the twelve princes. Psammetichus was standing last, and, being left without a cup, he took his helmet, which was of bronze,¹ from off his head, stretched it out to receive the liquor, and so made his libation. All the kings were accustomed to wear helmets, and all indeed wore them at this very time. Nor was there any crafty design in the action of Psammetichus. The eleven, however, when they came to consider what had been done, and bethought them of the oracle which had declared "that he who, of the twelve, should pour a libation from a cup of bronze, the same would be king of the whole land of Egypt," doubted at first if they should not put Psammetichus to death. Finding, however, upon examination, that he had acted in the matter without any guilty intent, they did not think it would be just to kill him; but determined, instead, to strip him of the chief part of his power and to banish him to the marshes, forbidding him to leave them or to hold any communication with the rest of Egypt.

152. This was the second time that Psammetichus had been driven into banishment. On a former occasion he had fled from Sabacôs the Ethiopian, who had put his father Necôs to death; and had taken refuge in Syria, from whence, after the retirement of the Ethiop in consequence of his dream, he was brought back by the Egyptians of the Saïtic canton. Now it was his ill-fortune to be banished a second time by the eleven kings, on account of the libation which he had poured from his helmet; on this occasion he fled to the marshes. Feeling that he was an injured man, and designing to avenge himself upon his persecutors, Psammetichus sent to the city of Buto, where there is an oracle of Latona, the most veracious of all the oracles of the Egyptians, and having inquired concerning means of vengeance, received for answer, that "Vengeance would come from the sea, when brazen men should appear." Great was his incredulity when this answer arrived, for never, he thought, would brazen men arrive to be his helpers. However, not long afterwards

¹ Bronze armour was of very early date in Egypt, and was therefore no novelty in the reign of Psammetichus.

certain Carians and Ionians, who had left their country on a voyage of plunder, were carried by stress of weather to Egypt, where they disembarked, all equipped in their brazen armour, and were seen by the natives, one of whom carried the tidings to Psammetichus, and, as he had never before seen men clad in brass, he reported that brazen men had come from the sea and were plundering the plain. Psammetichus, perceiving at once that the oracle was accomplished, made friendly advances to the strangers, and engaged them, by splendid promises, to enter into his service. He then, with their aid and that of the Egyptians who espoused his cause, attacked the eleven and vanquished them.¹

153. When Psammetichus had thus become sole monarch of Egypt, he built the southern gateway of the temple of Vulcan in Memphis, and also a court for Apis, in which Apis is kept whenever he makes his appearance in Egypt. This court is opposite the gateway of Psammetichus, and is surrounded with a colonnade and adorned with a multitude of figures. Instead of pillars, the colonnade rests upon colossal statues, twelve cubits in height. The Greek name for Apis is Epaphus.

154. To the Ionians and Carians who had lent him their assistance Psammetichus assigned as abodes two places opposite to each other, one on either side of the Nile, which received the name of "the Camps." He also made good all the splendid promises by which he had gained their support; and further, he intrusted to their care certain Egyptian children, whom they were to teach the language of the Greeks. These children, thus instructed, became the parents of the entire class of interpreters in Egypt. The Ionians and Carians occupied for many years the places assigned them by Psammetichus, which lay near the sea, a little below the city of Bubastis, on the Pelusiatic mouth of the Nile.² King Amasis, long afterwards, removed the Greeks hence, and settled them at Memphis to guard him against the native Egyptians. From the date of the original settlement of these persons in Egypt, we Greeks, through our intercourse with them, have acquired an accurate knowledge of the several events

¹ The improbability of a few Ionian and Carian pirates having enabled Psammetichus to obtain possession of the throne is sufficiently obvious. The Egyptians may not have been willing to inform Herodotus how long their kings had employed Greek mercenary troops before the Persian invasion.

² The site chosen for the Greek camps shows that they were thought necessary as a defence against foreign invasion from the eastward.

in Egyptian history, from the reign of Psammetichus downwards; but before his time no foreigners had ever taken up their residence in that land. The docks where their vessels were laid up, and the ruins of their habitations, were still to be seen in my day at the place where they dwelt originally, before they were removed by Amasis. Such was the mode by which Psammetichus became master of Egypt.

155. I have already made mention more than once of the Egyptian oracle,¹ and, as it well deserves notice, I shall now proceed to give an account of it more at length. It is a temple of Latona,² situated in the midst of a great city on the Sebenytic mouth of the Nile, at some distance up the river from the sea. The name of the city, as I have before observed, is Buto; and in it are two other temples also, one of Apollo and one of Diana. Latona's temple, which contains the oracle, is a spacious building with a gateway ten fathoms in height.³ The most wonderful thing that was actually to be seen about this temple was a chapel in the enclosure made of a single stone, the length and height of which were the same, each wall being forty cubits square, and the whole a single block! Another block of stone formed the roof, and projected at the eaves to the extent of four cubits.

156. This, as I have said, was what astonished me the most, of all the things that were actually to be seen about the temple. The next greatest marvel was the island called Chemmis. This island lies in the middle of a broad and deep lake close by the temple, and the natives declare that it floats. For my own part I did not see it float, or even move; and I wondered greatly, when they told me concerning it, whether there be really such a thing as a floating island. It has a grand temple of Apollo built upon it, in which are three distinct altars. Palm-trees grow on it in great abundance, and many other trees, some of which bear fruit, while others are barren. The Egyptians tell the following story in connection with this island, to explain the way in which it first came to float:—"In former times, when the isle was still fixed and motionless, Latona, one of the eight gods of the first order, who dwelt in the city of Buto, where now she has her oracle, received Apollo as a sacred charge from

¹ Supra, chs. 83, 133, and 152. There were several other oracles, but that of Buto, or Latona, was held in the highest repute. (See ch. 83.)

² Herodotus says that this goddess was one of the great deities (ch. 156).

³ This is the height of the pyramidal towers of the propylæum, or court of entrance.

Isis, and saved him by hiding him in what is now called the floating island. Typhon meanwhile was searching everywhere in hopes of finding the child of Osiris." (According to the Egyptians, Apollo and Diana are the children of Bacchus and Isis;¹ while Latona is their nurse and their preserver. They call Apollo, in their language, Horus; Ceres they call Isis; Diana, Bubastis. From this Egyptian tradition, and from no other, it must have been that Æschylus, the son of Euphorion, took the idea, which is found in none of the earlier poets, of making Diana the daughter of Ceres.) The island, therefore, in consequence of this event, was first made to float. Such at least is the account which the Egyptians give.

157. Psammetichus ruled Egypt for fifty-four years, during twenty-nine of which he pressed the siege of Azôtus² without intermission, till finally he took the place. Azôtus is a great town in Syria. Of all the cities that we know, none ever stood so long a siege.

158. Psammetichus left a son called Necôs, who succeeded him upon the throne. This prince was the first to attempt the construction of the canal to the Red Sea—a work completed afterwards by Darius the Persian—the length of which is four days' journey, and the width such as to admit of two triremes being rowed along it abreast. The water is derived from the Nile, which the canal leaves a little above the city of Bubastis,³ near Patûmus, the Arabian town,⁴ being continued thence until it joins the Red Sea. At first it is carried along the Arabian side of the Egyptian plain, as far as the chain of hills opposite Memphis, whereby the plain is bounded, and in which lie the great stone quarries; here it skirts the base of the hills running in a direction from west to east; after which it turns, and enters a narrow pass, trending southwards from this point, until it enters the Arabian Gulf. From the northern sea to that which is called the southern or Erythræan, the shortest and quickest

¹ Apollô was Horus, the son of Isis and Osiris (Ceres and Bacchus); but he had no sister in Egyptian mythology, and Diana was Bubastis or Pasht, who appears to be one of the great deities.

² Azotus is Ashdod of sacred Scripture. This shows how much the Egyptian power had declined when Psammetichus was obliged to besiege a city near the confines of Egypt for so long a time as twenty-nine years.

³ The commencement of the Red Sea canal was in different places at various periods. In the time of Herodotus it left the Pelusiæ branch a little above Bubastis.

⁴ Patumus was not near the Red Sea, but at the commencement of the canal, and was the Pithom mentioned in Exod. i. 11.

passage, which is from Mount Casius, the boundary between Egypt and Syria, to the Gulf of Arabia, is a distance of exactly one thousand furlongs. But the way by the canal is very much longer, on account of the crookedness of its course. A hundred and twenty thousand of the Egyptians, employed upon the work in the reign of Necôs, lost their lives in making the excavation. He at length desisted from his undertaking, in consequence of an oracle which warned him "that he was labouring for the barbarian."¹ The Egyptians call by the name of barbarians all such as speak a language different from their own.

159. Necôs, when he gave up the construction of the canal, turned all his thoughts to war, and set to work to build a fleet of triremes, some intended for service in the northern sea, and some for the navigation of the Erythræan. These last were built in the Arabian Gulf, where the dry docks in which they lay are still visible. These fleets he employed wherever he had occasion; while he also made war by land upon the Syrians, and defeated them in a pitched battle at Magdolus,² after which he made himself master of Cadytis,³ a large city of Syria. The dress which he wore on these occasions he sent to Branchidæ in Milesia, as an offering to Apollo.⁴ After having reigned in all sixteen years,⁵ Necôs died, and at his death bequeathed the throne to his son Psammis.

160. In the reign of Psammis, ambassadors from Elis ⁶ arrived

¹ This was owing to the increasing power of the Asiatic nations.

² The place here intended seems to be Megiddo, where Josiah lost his life, between Gilgal and Mount Carmel, on the road through Syria northwards, and not Migdol (Μαγδωλός), which was in Egypt. The similarity of the two names easily led to the mistake (2 Chron. xxxv. 22).

³ After the defeat and death of Josiah, Neco proceeded to Carchemish, and on his return, finding that the Jews had put Jehoahaz, his son, on the throne, "he made him a prisoner at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, and, after having imposed a tribute of 100 talents of silver and a talent of gold upon Jerusalem, he made his brother Eliakim (whose name he changed to Jehoiakim) king in his stead, carrying Jehoahaz captive to Egypt, where he died" (2 Kings xxiii. 29).

⁴ For an account of the temple of Apollo at Branchidæ, see Bk. i. ch. 157.

⁵ The reverses which soon afterwards befell the Egyptians were not mentioned to Herodotus. Neco was defeated at Carchemish by Nebuchadnezzar, in the 4th year of Jehoiakim (Jer. xlv. 2), and lost all the territory which it had been so long the object of the Pharaohs to possess. For "the king of Babylon took, from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates, all that pertained to the king of Egypt" (2 Kings xxiv. 7). This river of Egypt was the small torrent-bed that formed the boundary of the country on the N.E. side by the modern El Aréesh. Jerusalem was afterwards taken by Nebuchadnezzar.

⁶ This shows the great repute of the Egyptians for learning, even at this time, when they had greatly declined as a nation.

in Egypt, boasting that their arrangements for the conduct of the Olympic games were the best and fairest that could be devised, and fancying that not even the Egyptians, who surpassed all other nations in wisdom, could add anything to their perfection. When these persons reached Egypt, and explained the reason of their visit, the king summoned an assembly of all the wisest of the Egyptians. They met, and the Eleans having given them a full account of all their rules and regulations with respect to the contests, said that they had come to Egypt for the express purpose of learning whether the Egyptians could improve the fairness of their regulations in any particular. The Egyptians considered awhile, and then made inquiry, "If they allowed their own citizens to enter the lists?" The Eleans answered, "That the lists were open to all Greeks, whether they belonged to Elis or to any other state." Hereupon the Egyptians observed, "That if this were so, they departed from justice very widely, since it was impossible but that they would favour their own countrymen, and deal unfairly by foreigners. If therefore they really wished to manage the games with fairness, and if this was the object of their coming to Egypt, they advised them to confine the contests to strangers, and allow no native of Elis to be a candidate." Such was the advice which the Egyptians gave to the Eleans.

161. Psammis reigned only six years. He attacked Ethiopia, and died almost directly afterwards. Apries, his son,¹ succeeded him upon the throne, who, excepting Psammetichus, his great-grandfather, was the most prosperous of all the kings that ever ruled over Egypt. The length of his reign was twenty-five years, and in the course of it he marched an army to attack Sidon, and fought a battle with the king of Tyre by sea. When at length the time came that was fated to bring him woe, an occasion arose which I shall describe more fully in my Libyan history, only touching it very briefly here. An army despatched by Apries to attack Cyréné, having met with a terrible reverse, the Egyptians laid the blame on him, imagining that he had, of *malice prepense*, sent the troops into the jaws of destruction. They believed he had wished a vast number of them to be slain, in order that he himself might reign with more security over the rest of the Egyptians. Indignant therefore at this usage, the soldiers who returned and the friends of the slain broke instantly into revolt.

¹ Apries is the Pharaoh-Hophra of Jeremiah (xliv. 30).

162. Apries, on learning these circumstances, sent Amasis to the rebels, to appease the tumult by persuasion. Upon his arrival, as he was seeking to restrain the malcontents by his exhortations, one of them, coming behind him, put a helmet on his head, saying, as he put it on, that he thereby crowned him king. Amasis was not altogether displeased at the action, as his conduct soon made manifest: for no sooner had the insurgents agreed to make him actually their king, than he prepared to march with them against Apries. That monarch, on tidings of these events reaching him, sent Patarbêmis, one of his courtiers, a man of high rank, to Amasis, with orders to bring him alive into his presence. Patarbêmis, on arriving at the place where Amasis was, called on him to come back with him to the king, whereupon Amasis broke a coarse jest, and said, "Prythee take that back to thy master." When the envoy, notwithstanding this reply, persisted in his request, exhorting Amasis to obey the summons of the king, he made answer, "that this was exactly what he had long been intending to do; Apries would have no reason to complain of him on the score of delay; he would shortly come himself to the king, and bring others with him."¹ Patarbêmis, upon this, comprehending the intention of Amasis, partly from his replies, and partly from the preparations which he saw in progress, departed hastily, wishing to inform the king with all speed of what was going on. Apries, however, when he saw him approaching without Amasis, fell into a paroxysm of rage; and not giving himself time for reflection, commanded the nose and ears of Patarbêmis to be cut off. Then the rest of the Egyptians, who had hitherto espoused the cause of Apries, when they saw a man of such note among them so shamefully outraged, without a moment's hesitation went over to the rebels, and put themselves at the disposal of Amasis.

163. Apries, informed of this new calamity, armed his mercenaries, and led them against the Egyptians: this was a body of Carians and Ionians,² numbering thirty thousand men, which was now with him at Saïs, where his palace stood—a vast building, well worthy of notice. The army of Apries marched out to attack the host of the Egyptians, while that of Amasis went

¹ Compare the answer of Cyrus to Astyages (i. 127), which shows that this was a commonplace—the answer supposed to be proper for a powerful rebel.

² The Greek troops continued in the pay of the king. The state of Egypt, and the dethronement of Apries, are predicted in Isa. xix. 2, and in Jer. xliv. 30.

forth to fight the strangers; and now both armies drew near the city of Momemphis,¹ and prepared for the coming fight.

164. The Egyptians are divided into seven distinct classes²—these are, the priests, the warriors, the cowherds, the swineherds, the tradesmen, the interpreters, and the boatmen. Their titles indicate their occupations. The warriors consist of Hermotybian and Calasirian, who come from different cantons,³ the whole of Egypt being parcelled out into districts bearing this name.

165. The following cantons furnish the Hermotybian:—The cantons of Busiris, Saïs, Chemmis, Paprêmis, that of the island called Prosôpitis,⁴ and half of Natho. They number, when most numerous, a hundred and sixty thousand. None of them ever practises a trade, but all are given wholly to war.

166. The cantons of the Calasirians are different—they include the following:—The cantons of Thebes, Bubastis, Aphthis, Tanis,⁵ Mendes, Sebennytus, Athribis, Pharbæthus, Thmuis, Onuphis, Anysis, and Myecphoris—this last canton consists of an island which lies over against the town of Bubastis. The Calasirians, when at their greatest number, have amounted to two hundred and fifty thousand. Like the Hermotybian, they are forbidden to pursue any trade, and devote themselves entirely to warlike exercises, the son following the father's calling.

167. Whether the Greeks borrowed from the Egyptians their notions about trade, like so many others, I cannot say for certain. I have remarked that the Thracians, the Scyths, the Persians, the Lydians, and almost all other barbarians, hold the citizens who practise trades, and their children, in less repute than the rest, while they esteem as noble those who keep aloof from handicrafts, and especially honour such as are given wholly to war. These ideas prevail throughout the whole of Greece,

¹ Momemphis was on the edge of the desert, near the mouth of the Lycus canal.

² These classes, rather than *castes*, were, according to Herodotus—I. The sacerdotal. 2. The military. 3. The herdmen. 4. Swineherds. 5. Shopkeepers. 6. Interpreters. 7. Boatmen.

³ The number of the nomes or cantons varied at different times. Each nome was governed by a Nomarch, to whom was entrusted the levying of taxes, and various duties connected with the administration of the province.

⁴ Of Busiris, see ch. 61.

⁵ The city of Tanis is the Zoan of Scripture. [Cf. *Encycl. Biblica*, vol. iv. s.v.—E. H. B.]

particularly among the Lacedæmonians. Corinth is the place where mechanics are least despised.¹

168. The warrior class in Egypt had certain special privileges in which none of the rest of the Egyptians participated, except the priests. In the first place each man had twelve *aruræ*² of land assigned him free from tax. (The *arura* is a square of a hundred Egyptian cubits, the Egyptian cubit being of the same length as the Samian.) All the warriors enjoyed this privilege together; but there were other advantages which came to each in rotation, the same man never obtaining them twice. A thousand Calasirians, and the same number of Hermotybians, formed in alternate years the body-guard of the king; and during their year of service these persons, besides their *aruræ*, received a daily portion of meat and drink, consisting of five pounds of baked bread, two pounds of beef, and four cups of wine.

169. When Apries, at the head of his mercenaries, and Amasis, in command of the whole native force of the Egyptians, encountered one another near the city of Momemphis, an engagement presently took place. The foreign troops fought bravely, but were overpowered by numbers, in which they fell very far short of their adversaries. It is said that Apries believed that there was not a god who could cast him down from his eminence, so firmly did he think that he had established himself in his kingdom. But at this time the battle went against him; and, his army being worsted, he fell into the enemy's hands, and was brought back a prisoner to Saïs, where he was lodged in what had been his own house, but was now the palace of Amasis. Amasis treated him with kindness, and kept him in the palace for a while; but finding his conduct blamed by the Egyptians, who charged him with acting unjustly in preserving a man who had shown himself so bitter an enemy both to them and him, he gave Apries over into the hands of his former subjects, to deal with as they chose. Then the Egyp-

¹ The situation of Corinth led so naturally to extensive trade, and thence to that splendour and magnificence of living by which the useful and ornamental arts are most encouraged, that, in spite of Dorian pride and exclusiveness, the mechanic's occupation came soon to be regarded with a good deal of favour. As early as the time of Cypselus elaborate works of art proceeded from the Corinthian workshops, as the golden statue of Jupiter at Olympia. Later, Corinth became noted for the peculiar composition of its bronze, which was regarded as better suited for works of art than any other, and which under the name of *Æs Corinthiacum* was celebrated throughout the world.

² The *arura* was a little more than three-fourths of an English acre; and was only a land measure.

tians took him and strangled him, but having so done they buried him in the sepulchre of his fathers. This tomb is in the temple of Minerva, very near the sanctuary, on the left hand as one enters. The Saïtes buried all the kings who belonged to their canton inside this temple; and thus it even contains the tomb of Amasis, as well as that of Apries and his family. The latter is not so close to the sanctuary as the former, but still it is within the temple. It stands in the court, and is a spacious cloister, built of stone, and adorned with pillars carved so as to resemble palm-trees,¹ and with other sumptuous ornaments. Within the cloister is a chamber with folding doors, behind which lies the sepulchre of the king.

170. Here too, in this same precinct of Minerva at Saïs, is the burial-place of one whom I think it not right to mention in such a connection.² It stands behind the temple, against the back-wall, which it entirely covers. There are also some large stone obelisks in the enclosure, and there is a lake³ near them, adorned with an edging of stone. In form it is circular, and in size, as it seemed to me, about equal to the lake in Delos called "the Hoop."⁴

171. On this lake it is that the Egyptians represent by night his sufferings⁵ whose name I refrain from mentioning, and this representation they call their Mysteries.⁶ I know well the whole

¹ They are common in Egyptian temples, particularly in the Delta where they are often of granite.

² This was Osiris.

³ This lake still remains at Saïs, the modern *Sa-el-Hagar*. The stone casing, which always lined the sides of these sacred lakes (and which may be seen at Thebes, Hermonthes, and other places), is entirely gone; but the extent of the main enclosure, which included within it the lake and temple, is very evident; and the massive crude brick walls are standing to a great height. They are about seventy feet thick, and have layers of reeds and rushes at intervals, to serve as binders. The lake is still supplied by a canal from the river.

⁴ The Delian lake was a famous feature of the great temple or sacred enclosure of Apollo, which was the chief glory of that island.

⁵ The Egyptians and the Syrians had each the myth of a dying God; but they selected a different phenomenon for its basis; the former the Nile the Syrians, the aspect of nature, or, as Macrobius shows, the sun; which during one part of the year manifesting its vivifying effects on the earth's surface, seemed to die on the approach of winter; and hence the notion of a God who was both mortal and immortal. In the religion of Greece we trace this more obscurely; but the Cretans believed that Jupiter had died, and even showed his tomb. This belief was perhaps borrowed from Egypt or from Syria; for the Greeks derided the notion of a God dying.

⁶ The sufferings and death of Osiris were the great mystery of the Egyptian religion; and some traces of it are perceptible among other people of antiquity. His being the divine goodness, and the abstract idea of "good," his manifestation upon earth (like an Indian God), his

course of the proceedings in these ceremonies,¹ but they shall not pass my lips. So too, with regard to the mysteries of Ceres, which the Greeks term "the Thesmophoria," I know them, but I shall not mention them, except so far as may be done without impiety. The daughters of Danaus brought these rites from Egypt, and taught them to the Pelasgic women of the Peloponnese. Afterwards, when the inhabitants of the peninsula were driven from their homes by the Dorians, the rites perished. Only in Arcadia, where the natives remained and were not compelled to migrate,² their observance continued.

172. After Apries had been put to death in the way that I have described above, Amasis reigned over Egypt. He belonged to the canton of Saïs, being a native of the town called Siouph. At first his subjects looked down on him and held him in small esteem, because he had been a mere private person, and of a death, and resurrection, and his office as judge of the dead in a future state, look like the early revelation of a future manifestation of the deity converted into a mythological fable. Osiris may be said rather to have presided over the judgment of the dead, than to have judged them; he gave admission, to those who were found worthy, to the abode of happiness. He was not the avenging deity; he did not punish, nor could he show mercy, or subvert the judgment pronounced. It was a simple question of fact. If wicked they were destined to suffer punishment. A man's actions were balanced in the scales against justice or truth, and if found wanting he was excluded from future happiness. Thus, though the Egyptians are said to believe the gods were capable of influencing destiny (Euseb. Pr. Ev. iii. 4), it is evident that Osiris (like the Greek Zeus) was bound by it; and the wicked were punished, not because he rejected them, but because they *were* wicked. Each man's conscience, released from the sinful body, was his own judge; and self-condemnation hereafter followed up the *γνώσι* and *αλοχύεο σεαυτὸν* enjoined on earth.

¹ These mysteries of Osiris, Herodotus says, were introduced into Greece by the daughters of Danaus. The fables of antiquity had generally several meanings; they were either historical, physical, or religious. The less instructed were led to believe Osiris represented some natural phenomenon; as the inundation of the Nile, which disappearing again, and losing its effects in the sea, was construed into the manifestation and death of the deity, destroyed by Typhon; and the story of his body having been carried to Byblus, and that of the head which went annually from Egypt to that place, swimming on the sea (Lucian, de Deâ Syriâ) for seven days, were the allegory of the water of the Nile carried by the currents to the Syrian coast; though Pausanias (x. 12) says they lamented Osiris, "when the Nile began to rise." His fabulous history was also thought by the Greeks to be connected with the sun; but it was not so viewed in early times by the Egyptians; and this was rather an Asiatic notion, and an instance of the usual adaptation of deities to each other in different mythologies. Least of all was he thought to be a man deified. The portion of the mysteries imparted to strangers, as to Herodotus, Plutarch, and others, and even to Pythagoras, was limited; and the more important secrets were not even revealed to all "the priests, but to those only who were the most approved." [See J. G. Frazer's *Adonis, Attis, Osiris* (1907).—E. H. B.]

² Compare viii. 73.

house of no great distinction; but after a time Amasis succeeded in reconciling them to his rule, not by severity, but by cleverness. Among his other splendour he had a golden foot-pan, in which his guests and himself were wont upon occasion to wash their feet. This vessel he caused to be broken in pieces, and made of the gold an image of one of the gods, which he set up in the most public place in the whole city; upon which the Egyptians flocked to the image, and worshipped it with the utmost reverence. Amasis, finding this was so, called an assembly and opened the matter to them, explaining how the image had been made of the foot-pan, wherein they had been wont formerly to wash their feet and to put all manner of filth, yet now it was greatly revered. "And truly," he went on to say, "it has gone with him as with the foot-pan. If he was a private person formerly, yet now he had come to be their king. And so he bade them honour and reverence him." Such was the mode in which he won over the Egyptians, and brought them to be content to do him service.

173. The following was the general habit of his life:—From early dawn to the time when the forum is wont to fill,¹ he sedulously transacted all the business that was brought before him; during the remainder of the day he drank and joked with his guests, passing the time in witty and, sometimes, scarcely seemly conversation. It grieved his friends that he should thus demean himself, and accordingly some of them chid him on the subject, saying to him,—“Oh! king, thou dost but ill guard thy royal dignity whilst thou allowest thyself in such levities. Thou shouldst sit in state upon a stately throne, and busy thyself with affairs the whole day long. So would the Egyptians feel that a great man rules them, and thou wouldst be better spoken of. But now thou conductest thyself in no kingly fashion.” Amasis answered them thus:—“Bowmen bend their bows when they wish to shoot; unbrace them when the shooting is over. Were they kept always strung they would break, and fail the archer in time of need. So it is with men. If they give themselves constantly to serious work, and never indulge awhile in pastime or sport, they lose their senses, and become mad or

¹ In early times the Greeks divided the day into three parts. The division, according to Dio Chrysostomus, was *πρωτῆ*, sunrise, or early morn; *περὶ πλήθουσιν ἀγοράν*, market time or forenoon, the third hour; *μεσημβρία*, midday; *δείλη*, or *περὶ δείλην*, afternoon, or the ninth hour; and *ἑσπέρα*, evening, or sunset. These are very like the Arabic divisions at the present time, for each of which they have a stated number of prayers.

moody. Knowing this, I divide my life between pastime and business." Thus he answered his friends.

174. It is said that Amasis, even while he was a private man, had the same tastes for drinking and jesting, and was averse to engaging in any serious employment. He lived in constant feasts and revelries, and whenever his means failed him, he roamed about and robbed people. On such occasions the persons from whom he had stolen would bring him, if he denied the charge, before the nearest oracle; sometimes the oracle would pronounce him guilty of the theft, at other times it would acquit him. When afterwards he came to be king, he neglected the temples of such gods as had declared that he was not a thief, and neither contributed to their adornment, nor frequented them for sacrifice; since he regarded them as utterly worthless, and their oracles as wholly false: but the gods who had detected his guilt he considered to be true gods whose oracles did not deceive, and these he honoured exceedingly.

175. First of all, therefore, he built the gateway¹ of the temple of Minerva at Saïs, which is an astonishing work, far surpassing all other buildings of the same kind both in extent and height, and built with stones of rare size and excellency. In the next place, he presented to the temple a number of large colossal statues, and several prodigious andro-sphinxes,² besides certain stones for the repairs, of a most extraordinary size. Some of these he got from the quarries over against Memphis, but the largest were brought from Elephantiné,³ which is twenty days' voyage from Saïs. Of all these wonderful masses that which I most admire is a chamber made of a single stone, which was quarried at Elephantiné. It took three years to convey this block from the quarry to Saïs; and in the conveyance were employed no fewer than two thousand labourers, who were all from the class of boatmen. The length of this chamber on the outside is twenty-one cubits, its breadth fourteen cubits, and its height eight. The measurements inside are the following:—The length, eighteen cubits and five-sixths; the breadth, twelve cubits; and the height, five. It lies near the entrance of the temple, where it was left in consequence of the following circumstance:—It happened that the architect, just as the stone

¹ Not a "portico," but the lofty towers of the Area, or Court of Entrance.

² The usual sphinxes of the *dromos*, or avenue, leading to the entrance of the large temples.

³ These were granite blocks.

had reached the spot where it now stands, heaved a sigh, considering the length of time that the removal had taken, and feeling wearied with the heavy toil. The sigh was heard by Amasis, who, regarding it as an omen, would not allow the chamber to be moved forward any further. Some, however, say that one of the workmen engaged at the levers was crushed and killed by the mass, and that this was the reason of its being left where it now stands.

176. To the other temples of much note Amasis also made magnificent offerings—at Memphis, for instance, he gave the recumbent colossus¹ in front of the temple of Vulcan, which is seventy-five feet long. Two other colossal statues stand on the same base, each twenty feet high, carved in the stone of Ethiopia, one on either side of the temple. There is also a stone colossus of the same size at Saïs, recumbent like that at Memphis. Amasis finally built the temple of Isis at Memphis, a vast structure, well worth seeing.

177. It is said that the reign of Amasis was the most prosperous time that Egypt ever saw,²—the river was more liberal to the land, and the land brought forth more abundantly for the service of man than had ever been known before; while the number of inhabited cities was not less than twenty thousand. It was this king Amasis who established the law that every Egyptian should appear once a year before the governor of his canton,³ and show his means of living; or, failing to do so, and to prove that he got an honest livelihood, should be put to death. Solon the Athenian borrowed this law from the Egyptians, and imposed it on his countrymen, who have observed it ever since. It is indeed an excellent custom.

178. Amasis was partial to the Greeks,⁴ and, among other favours which he granted them, gave to such as liked to settle in Egypt the city of Naucratis⁵ for their residence. To those

¹ It was an unusual position for an Egyptian statue; and this, as well as the other at Memphis, and the monolith, may have been left on the ground, in consequence of the troubles which came upon Egypt at the time; and which the Egyptians concealed from Herodotus.

² This can only relate to the internal state of the country; and what Herodotus afterwards says shows this was his meaning.

³ Each nome, or canton, was governed by a nomarch.

⁴ Amasis had reason to be hostile to the Greeks, who had assisted Apries, but, perceiving the value of their aid, he became friendly to them, and granted them many privileges, which had the effect of inducing many to settle in Egypt, and afterwards led them to assist the Egyptians in freeing their country from the Persians.

⁵ This was "formerly" the only commercial entrepôt for Greek merchandise, and was established for the first time by Amasis.

who only wished to trade upon the coast, and did not want to fix their abode in the country, he granted certain lands where they might set up altars and erect temples to the gods. Of these temples the grandest and most famous, which is also the most frequented, is that called "the Hellenium." It was built conjointly by the Ionians, Dorians, and Æolians, the following cities taking part in the work:—the Ionian states of Chios, Teos, Phocæa, and Clazomenæ; Rhodes, Cnidus, Halicarnassus, and Phasêlis¹ of the Dorians; and Mytilène of the Æolians. These are the states to whom the temple belongs, and they have the right of appointing the governors of the factory; the other cities which claim a share in the building, claim what in no sense belongs to them. Three nations, however, consecrated for themselves separate temples—the Eginetans one to Jupiter, the Samians to Juno, and the Milesians to Apollo.²

179. In ancient times there was no factory but Naucratis in the whole of Egypt; and if a person entered one of the other mouths of the Nile, he was obliged to swear that he had not come there of his own free will. Having so done, he was bound to sail in his ship to the Canobic mouth, or, were that impossible owing to contrary winds, he must take his wares by boat all round the Delta, and so bring them to Naucratis, which had an exclusive privilege.

180. It happened in the reign of Amasis that the temple of Delphi had been accidentally burnt,³ and the Amphictyons⁴ had contracted to have it rebuilt for three hundred talents, of which sum one-fourth was to be furnished by the Delphians. Under these circumstances the Delphians went from city to city begging contributions, and among their other wanderings came to Egypt and asked for help. From few other places did they obtain so much—Amasis gave them a thousand talents of alum,⁵ and the Greek settlers twenty minæ.⁶

181. A league was concluded by Amasis with the Cyrenæans, by which Cyrêné and Egypt became close friends and allies. He likewise took a wife from that city, either as a sign of his friendly

¹ Phasêlis lay on the east coast of Lycia, directly at the base of Mount Solyma (*Takhtalu*).

² That is, to the gods specially worshipped in their respective countries.

³ The temple at Delphi was burnt in the year B.C. 548, consequently in the 21st year of Amasis.

⁴ See Book vii. ch. 200.

⁵ That of Egypt was celebrated.

⁶ Twenty minæ would be somewhat more than £80 of our money. The entire sum which the Delphians had to collect exceeded £18,000.

feeling, or because he had a fancy to marry a Greek woman. However this may be, certain it is that he espoused a lady of Cyrêné, by name Ladicé, daughter, some say, of Battus or Arcesilaüs, the king—others, of Critobûlus, one of the chief citizens. When the time came to complete the contract, Amasis was struck with weakness. Astonished hereat—for he was not wont to be so afflicted—the king thus addressed his bride: “Woman, thou hast certainly bewitched me—now therefore be sure thou shalt perish more miserably than ever woman perished yet.” Ladicé protested her innocence, but in vain; Amasis was not softened. Hereupon she made a vow internally, that if he recovered within the day (for no longer time was allowed her), she would present a statue to the temple of Venus at Cyrêné. Immediately she obtained her wish, and the king’s weakness disappeared. Amasis loved her greatly ever after, and Ladicé performed her vow. The statue which she caused to be made, and sent to Cyrêné, continued there to my day, standing with its face looking outwards from the city. Ladicé herself, when Cambyzes conquered Egypt, suffered no wrong; for Cambyzes, on learning of her who she was, sent her back unharmed to her country.

182. Besides the marks of favour already mentioned, Amasis also enriched with offerings many of the Greek temples. He sent to Cyrêné a statue of Minerva covered with plates of gold,¹ and a painted likeness² of himself. To the Minerva of Lindus he gave two statues in stone, and a linen corslet³ well worth inspection. To the Samian Juno he presented two statues of himself, made in wood,⁴ which stood in the great temple to my day, behind the doors. Samos was honoured with these gifts on account of the bond of friendship subsisting between Amasis and Polycrates, the son of Æaces:⁵ Lindus, for no such reason, but because of the tradition that the daughters of Danaus⁶ touched

¹ Statues of this kind were not uncommon (*infra*, vi. 118). The most famous was that of Minerva [Athena] at Delphi, which the Athenians dedicated from the spoils of their victory at the Eurymedon.

² The Egyptians had actual portraits of their kings at a very remote period; and those in the sculptures were real likenesses. There are some portraits painted on wood and affixed to mummy cases, but these are of Greek and Roman time, and an innovation not Egyptian.

³ It has been conjectured that the “tree-wool” of Herodotus was silk; but cotton is commonly used for embroidery even at the present day.

⁴ Pausanias (ii. 19) says “all ancient statues were of wood, especially those of the Egyptians.”

⁵ Vide *infra*, iii. 39-43.

⁶ The flight of Danaus from Egypt to Greece is not only mentioned by

there in their flight from the sons of Ægyptus, and built the temple of Minerva. Such were the offerings of Amasis. He likewise took Cyprus, which no man had ever done before,¹ and compelled it to pay him a tribute.²

Herodotus, but by Manetho and others, and was credited both by Greeks and Egyptians.

¹ According to Greek tradition, the conquest was effected by a certain Cinyras, a Syrian king, whom Homer makes contemporary with Agamemnon. (Il. xi. 20.) His capital was Paphos.

² Neco had made Egypt a naval power (supra, ch. 159), which she thenceforth continued to be.

ADDED NOTES BY THE EDITOR

(1.) *The Pyramids*.—The Pyramids divide themselves into seven large groups, the two largest (at Gizeh) being the work of the old kings, while the five smaller were probably built in the Vth and VIth dynasties. On being investigated, the chambers within several of these structures were found to be covered with hieroglyphic signs. They are among the very oldest literary monuments of Egypt. The pyramid texts are religious, and contain hymns, prayers, and magical formulæ, reflecting the popular ideas of life after death. Most of them are in poetical language. Large and important finds of gems and treasure were dug up in the under chambers, as well as of reliefs, granite figures, and the like.

(2.) Among recent discoveries in Egypt the *Tel-el-Amarna* tablets are the most important. These clay tablets, in cuneiform character, enable us to get a singularly helpful understanding not only of the civilisation of the period (about 1400 B.C.), but also of the political status of Egypt at the time. They prove the prevalence of Babylonian influence and civilising power in Western Asia in a hitherto unexpected fashion. Even Egyptian kings wrote to their Syrian subjects in Babylonian.

(3.) The *Labyrinth* was probably a temple, though (so far) no architectural plan of the building has been obtained.

The discovery by Dr. A. J. Evans of a huge, many-chambered building in Cnossus (Crete), on the traditional site of the palace of Minos, has suggested to him the idea that this Cretan structure was the original labyrinth. Its huge size and complexity caused the name to be used in its conventional meaning; but originally the word seems to mean "house of the double-axe" (*labrys*).

Every excavation made proves the extraordinarily high state of civilisation which had been attained in ancient Egypt.

THE THIRD BOOK, ENTITLED THALIA

1. THE above-mentioned Amasis was the Egyptian king against whom Cambyzes, son of Cyrus, made his expedition; and with him went an army composed of the many nations under his rule, among them being included both Ionic and Æolic Greeks. The reason of the invasion was the following.¹ Cambyzes, by the advice of a certain Egyptian, who was angry with Amasis for having torn him from his wife and children, and given him over to the Persians, had sent a herald to Amasis to ask his daughter in marriage. His adviser was a physician, whom Amasis, when Cyrus had requested that he would send him the most skilful of all the Egyptian eye-doctors,² singled out as the best from the whole number. Therefore the Egyptian bore Amasis a grudge, and his reason for urging Cambyzes to ask the hand of the king's daughter was, that if he complied, it might cause him annoyance; if he refused, it might make Cambyzes his enemy. When the message came, Amasis, who much dreaded the power of the Persians, was greatly perplexed whether to give his daughter or no; for that Cambyzes did not intend to make her his wife, but would only receive her as his concubine, he knew for certain. He therefore cast the matter in his mind, and finally resolved what he would do. There was a daughter of the late king Apries, named Nitêtis,³ a tall and beautiful woman, the last survivor of that royal house. Amasis took this woman, and, decking her out with gold and costly garments, sent her to Persia as if she had been his own child. Some time afterwards, Cambyzes, as he gave her an embrace, happened to call her by her father's name, whereupon she said to him, "I see, O king, thou knowest not how thou hast been cheated by Amasis; who

¹ Herodotus had already told us that the subjugation of Egypt was among the designs of Cyrus (i. 153). Indeed, two motives of a public character, each by itself enough to account for the attack, urged the Persian arms in this direction; viz., revenge, and the lust of conquest. Grote has noticed the "impulse of aggrandisement," which formed the predominant characteristic of the Persian nation at this period.

² Vide supra, ii. 84. Egyptians first, and afterwards Greeks, were the court physicians of the Achæmenidæ.

³ This account, which Herodotus says was that of the Persians, is utterly inadmissible.

took me, and, tricking me out with gauds, sent me to thee as his own daughter. But I am in truth the child of Apries, who was his lord and master, until he rebelled against him, together with the rest of the Egyptians, and put him to death." It was this speech, and the cause of quarrel it disclosed, which roused the anger of Cambyses, son of Cyrus, and brought his arms upon Egypt. Such is the Persian story.

2. The Egyptians, however, claim Cambyses as belonging to them, declaring that he was the son of this Nitêtis. It was Cyrus, they say, and not Cambyses, who sent to Amasis for his daughter. But here they mis-state the truth. Acquainted as they are beyond all other men with the laws and customs of the Persians, they cannot but be well aware, first, that it is not the Persian wont to allow a bastard to reign when there is a legitimate heir; and next, that Cambyses was the son of Cassandané, the daughter of Pharnaspes, an Achæmenian, and not of this Egyptian. But the fact is, that they pervert history, in order to claim relationship with the house of Cyrus. Such is the truth of this matter.

3. I have also heard another account, which I do not at all believe,—that a Persian lady came to visit the wives of Cyrus, and seeing how tall and beautiful were the children of Cassandané, then standing by, broke out into loud praise of them, and admired them exceedingly. But Cassandané, wife of Cyrus, answered, "Though such the children I have borne him, yet Cyrus slights me and gives all his regard to the new-comer from Egypt." Thus did she express her vexation on account of Nitêtis: whereupon Cambyses, the eldest of her boys, exclaimed, "Mother, when I am a man, I will turn Egypt upside down for you." He was but ten years old, as the tale runs, when he said this, and astonished all the women, yet he never forgot it afterwards; and on this account, they say, when he came to be a man, and mounted the throne, he made his expedition against Egypt.

4. There was another matter, quite distinct, which helped to bring about the expedition. One of the mercenaries of Amasis,¹ a Halicarnassian, Phanes by name, a man of good judgment, and a brave warrior, dissatisfied for some reason or other with his master, deserted the service, and, taking ship, fled to Cambyses, wishing to get speech with him. As he was a person of no small

¹ The Carian and Ionian mercenaries mentioned repeatedly in the second Book (chs. 152, 154, 163, etc.).

account among the mercenaries, and one who could give very exact intelligence about Egypt, Amasis, anxious to recover him, ordered that he should be pursued. He gave the matter in charge to one of the most trusty of the eunuchs, who went in quest of the Halicarnassian in a vessel of war. The eunuch caught him in Lycia, but did not contrive to bring him back to Egypt, for Phanes outwitted him by making his guards drunk, and then escaping into Persia. Now it happened that Cambyses was meditating his attack on Egypt, and doubting how he might best pass the desert, when Phanes arrived, and not only told him all the secrets of Amasis, but advised him also how the desert might be crossed. He counselled him to send an ambassador to the king of the Arabs,¹ and ask him for safe-conduct through the region.

5. Now the only entrance into Egypt is by this desert: the country from Phœnicia to the borders of the city Cadytis² belongs to the people called the Palæstine Syrians;³ from Cadytis, which it appears to me is a city almost as large as Sardis, the marts upon the coast till you reach Jenysus are the Arabian king's; after Jenysus the Syrians again come in, and extend to Lake Serbônîs, near the place where Mount Casius juts out into the sea. At Lake Serbônîs, where the tale goes that Typhon hid himself, Egypt begins. Now the whole tract between Jenysus on the one side, and Lake Serbônîs and Mount Casius on the other, and this is no small space, being as much as three days' journey, is a dry desert without a drop of water.

6. I shall now mention a thing of which few of those who sail to Egypt are aware. Twice a year wine is brought into Egypt from every part of Greece, as well as from Phœnicia, in earthen jars;⁴ and yet in the whole country you will nowhere see, as I may say, a single jar. What then, every one will ask, becomes of the jars? This, too, I will clear up. The burgomaster of each town has to collect the wine-jars within his district, and to carry them to Memphis, where they are all filled with water by the Memphians, who then convey them to this desert tract of

¹ Herodotus appears to have thought that the Arabs were united under the government of a single king.

² That is, Gaza.

³ Palestine Syria means properly "the Syria of the Philistines," who were in ancient times by far the most powerful race of *southern* Syria (cf. Gen. xxi. 32-4, xxvi. 14-8; Ex. xiii. 17, etc.).

⁴ Besides the quantity of wine made in Egypt, a great supply was annually imported from Greece, after the trade was opened with that country.

Syria. And so it comes to pass that all the jars which enter Egypt year by year, and are there put up to sale, find their way into Syria, whither all the old jars have gone before them.

7. This way of keeping the passage into Egypt fit for use by storing water there, was begun by the Persians so soon as they became masters of that country. As, however, at the time of which we speak the tract had not yet been so supplied, Cambyzes took the advice of his Halicarnassian guest, and sent messengers to the Arabian to beg a safe-conduct through the region. The Arabian granted his prayer, and each pledged faith to the other.

8. The Arabs keep such pledges more religiously than almost any other people.¹ They plight faith with the forms following. When two men would swear a friendship, they stand on each side of a third: he with a sharp stone makes a cut on the inside of the hand of each near the middle finger, and, taking a piece from their dress, dips it in the blood of each, and moistens therewith seven stones² lying in the midst, calling the while on Bacchus and Urania. After this, the man who makes the pledge commends the stranger (or the citizen, if citizen he be) to all his friends, and they deem themselves bound to stand to the engagement. They have but these two gods, to wit, Bacchus and Urania;³ and they say that in their mode of cutting the hair, they follow Bacchus. Now their practice is to cut it in a ring, away from the temples. Bacchus they call in their language Orotal, and Urania, Alilat.

9. When, therefore, the Arabian had pledged his faith to the messengers of Cambyzes, he straightway contrived as follows:—he filled a number of camels' skins with water, and loading therewith all the live camels that he possessed, drove them into the desert, and awaited the coming of the army. This is the more likely of the two tales that are told. The other is an improbable story, but, as it is related, I think that I ought not to pass it by. There is a great river in Arabia, called the Corys,

¹ The fidelity of the Arabs to their engagements is noticed by all travellers. Mr. Kinglake remarks, "It is not of the Bedouins that travellers are afraid, for the safe-conduct granted by the Chief of the ruling tribe is never, I believe, violated." (Eothen.)

² Events were often recorded in the East by stones. Comp. the 12 stones placed in the bed of the Jordan, Joshua iv. 9. The number 7 had an important meaning (as in the Bible frequently), as well as 4. The former was the fortunate number. It was also a sacred number with the Persians.

³ There can be little doubt that the religion of the Arabians in the time of Herodotus was *astral*—"the worship of the host of heaven."

which empties itself into the Erythræan sea. The Arabian king, they say, made a pipe of the skins of oxen and other beasts, reaching from this river all the way to the desert, and so brought the water to certain cisterns which he had had dug in the desert to receive it. It is a twelve days' journey from the river to this desert tract. And the water, they say, was brought through three different pipes to three separate places.

10. Psammenitus, son of Amasis, lay encamped at the mouth of the Nile, called the Pelusiæ, awaiting Cambyses. For Cambyses, when he went up against Egypt, found Amasis no longer in life: he had died after ruling Egypt forty and four years, during all which time no great misfortune had befallen him. When he died, his body was embalmed, and buried in the tomb which he had himself caused to be made in the temple.¹ After his son Psammenitus had mounted the throne, a strange prodigy occurred in Egypt:—Rain fell at Egyptian Thebes, a thing which never happened before, and which, to the present time, has never happened again, as the Thebans themselves testify. In Upper Egypt it does not usually rain at all; but on this occasion, rain fell at Thebes in small drops.

11. The Persians crossed the desert, and, pitching their camp close to the Egyptians, made ready for battle. Hereupon the mercenaries in the pay of Psammenitus, who were Greeks and Carians, full of anger against Phanes for having brought a foreign army upon Egypt, bethought themselves of a mode whereby they might be revenged on him. Phanes had left sons in Egypt. The mercenaries took these, and leading them to the camp, displayed them before the eyes of their father; after which they brought out a bowl, and, placing it in the space between the two hosts, they led the sons of Phanes, one by one, to the vessel, and slew them over it.² When the last was dead, water and wine were poured into the bowl, and all the soldiers tasted of the blood, and so they went to the battle. Stubborn was the fight which followed, and it was not till vast numbers had been slain upon both sides, that the Egyptians turned and fled.

12. On the field where this battle was fought I saw a very wonderful thing which the natives pointed out to me. The bones of the slain lie scattered upon the field in two lots, those of the Persians in one place by themselves, as the bodies lay at the first—those of the Egyptians in another place apart from

¹ The temple of Minerva at Sais. (Vide supra, ii. 169.)

² This was a mode of making an oath binding.

them: If, then, you strike the Persian skulls, even with a pebble, they are so weak, that you break a hole in them; but the Egyptian skulls are so strong, that you may smite them with a stone and you will scarcely break them in. They gave me the following reason for this difference, which seemed to me likely enough:—The Egyptians (they said) from early childhood have the head shaved, and so by the action of the sun the skull becomes thick and hard. The same cause prevents baldness in Egypt, where you see fewer bald men than in any other land. Such, then, is the reason why the skulls of the Egyptians are so strong. The Persians, on the other hand, have feeble skulls, because they keep themselves shaded from the first,¹ wearing turbans upon their heads. What I have here mentioned I saw with my own eyes, and I observed also the like at Paprêmis, in the case of the Persians who were killed with Achæmenes, the son of Darius, by Inarus the Libyan.²

13. The Egyptians who fought in the battle, no sooner turned their backs upon the enemy, than they fled away in complete disorder to Memphis, where they shut themselves up within the walls. Hereupon Cambyses sent a Mytilenæan vessel, with a Persian herald on board, who was to sail up the Nile to Memphis, and invite the Egyptians to a surrender. They, however, when they saw the vessel entering the town, poured forth in crowds from the castle, destroyed the ship, and, tearing the crew limb from limb, so bore them into the fortress. After this Memphis was besieged, and in due time surrendered. Hereon the Libyans who bordered upon Egypt, fearing the fate of that country, gave themselves up to Cambyses without a battle, made an agreement to pay tribute to him, and forthwith sent him gifts.³ The Cyrenæans too, and the Barcæans, having the same fear as the Libyans, immediately did the like. Cambyses received the Libyan presents very graciously, but not so the gifts of the Cyrenæans. They had sent no more than five hundred *minæ*⁴ of silver, which Cambyses, I imagine, thought too little. He therefore snatched the money from them, and with his own hands scattered it among his soldiers.

14. Ten days after the fort had fallen, Cambyses resolved to

¹ Probably the shading by the turban is alone meant.

² Vide infra, vii. 7. The revolt of Inarus is fixed by Clinton to the year B.C. 460, the fifth year of Artaxerxes.

³ Vide infra, iv. 165. Arcesilaüs III. was king of Cyrene at this time.

⁴ If Attic *minæ* are intended, as is probable, the value of the Cyrenæan contribution would be little more than £2000 of our money.

try the spirit of Psammenitus, the Egyptian king, whose whole reign had been but six months. He therefore had him set in one of the suburbs, and many other Egyptians with him, and there subjected him to insult. First of all he sent his daughter out from the city, clothed in the garb of a slave, with a pitcher to draw water. Many virgins, the daughters of the chief nobles, accompanied her, wearing the same dress. When the damsels came opposite the place where their fathers sate, shedding tears and uttering cries of woe, the fathers, all but Psammenitus, wept and wailed in return, grieving to see their children in so sad a plight; but he, when he had looked and seen, bent his head towards the ground. In this way passed by the water-carriers. Next to them came Psammenitus' son, and two thousand Egyptians of the same age with him—all of them having ropes round their necks and bridles in their mouths—and they too passed by on their way to suffer death for the murder of the Mytilenæans who were destroyed, with their vessel, in Memphis. For so had the royal judges given their sentence—"for each Mytilenæan ten of the noblest Egyptians must forfeit life." King Psammenitus saw the train pass on, and knew his son was being led to death, but, while the other Egyptians who sate around him wept and were sorely troubled, he showed no further sign than when he saw his daughter. And now, when they too were gone, it chanced that one of his former boon-companions, a man advanced in years, who had been stripped of all that he had and was a beggar, came where Psammenitus, son of Amasis, and the rest of the Egyptians were, asking alms from the soldiers. At this sight the king burst into tears, and, weeping out aloud, called his friend by his name, and smote himself on the head. Now there were some who had been set to watch Psammenitus and see what he would do as each train went by; so these persons went and told Cambyzes of his behaviour. Then he, astonished at what was done, sent a messenger to Psammenitus, and questioned him, saying, "Psammenitus, thy lord Cambyzes asketh thee why, when thou sawest thy daughter brought to shame, and thy son on his way to death, thou didst neither utter cry nor shed tear, while to a beggar, who is, he hears, a stranger to thy race, thou gavest those marks of honour." To this question Psammenitus made answer, "O son of Cyrus, my own misfortunes were too great for tears; but the woe of my friend deserved them. When a man falls from splendour and plenty into beggary at the threshold of old age,

one may well weep for him." When the messenger brought back this answer, Cambyses owned it was just; Cræsus, likewise, the Egyptians say, burst into tears—for he too had come into Egypt with Cambyses—and the Persians who were present wept. Even Cambyses himself was touched with pity, and he forthwith gave an order, that the son of Psammenitus should be spared from the number of those appointed to die, and Psammenitus himself brought from the suburb into his presence.

15. The messengers were too late to save the life of Psammenitus' son, who had been cut in pieces the first of all; but they took Psammenitus himself and brought him before the king. Cambyses allowed him to live with him, and gave him no more harsh treatment; nay, could he have kept from intermeddling with affairs, he might have recovered Egypt, and ruled it as governor. For the Persian wont is to treat the sons of kings with honour, and even to give their fathers' kingdoms to the children of such as revolt from them.¹ There are many cases from which one may collect that this is the Persian rule, and especially those of Pausiris and Thannyras. Thannyras was son of Inarus the Libyan, and was allowed to succeed his father, as was also Pausiris, son of Amyrtæus; yet certainly no two persons ever did the Persians more damage than Amyrtæus and Inarus. In this case Psammenitus plotted evil, and received his reward accordingly. He was discovered to be stirring up revolt in Egypt, wherefore Cambyses, when his guilt clearly appeared, compelled him to drink bull's blood,² which presently caused his death. Such was the end of Psammenitus.

16. After this Cambyses left Memphis, and went to Saïs, wishing to do that which he actually did on his arrival there. He entered the palace of Amasis, and straightway commanded that the body of the king should be brought forth from the sepulchre. When the attendants did according to his commandment, he further bade them scourge the body, and prick it with goads, and pluck the hair from it,³ and heap upon it all

¹ It appears from the Jewish history that this was a general Oriental practice in ancient times. When Pharaoh-Necho deposed Jehoahaz, he made Eliakim (Jehoiakim), his brother, king over Judah (2 Kings xxiii. 34). And when Nebuchadnezzar deposed Jehoiachin (2 Kings xxiv. 17), he set Mattaniah (Zedekiah), his uncle, upon the throne.

² There seems to have been a wide-spread belief among the ancients that bull's blood was poisonous.

³ This is evidently a Greek statement, and not derived from the Egyptian priests. There was no hair to pluck out, the "head and all the body" of the kings and priests being shaved. The whole story may be doubted.

manner of insults. The body, however, having been embalmed, resisted, and refused to come apart, do what they would to it; so the attendants grew weary of their work; whereupon Cambyzes bade them take the corpse and burn it. This was truly an impious command to give, for the Persians hold fire to be a god,¹ and never by any chance burn their dead. Indeed this practice is unlawful, both with them and with the Egyptians—with them for the reason above mentioned, since they deem it wrong to give the corpse of a man to a god; and with the Egyptians, because they believe fire to be a live animal, which eats whatever it can seize, and then, glutted with the food, dies with the matter which it feeds upon. Now to give a man's body to be devoured by beasts is in no wise agreeable to their customs, and indeed this is the very reason why they embalm their dead; namely, to prevent them from being eaten in the grave by worms. Thus Cambyzes commanded what both nations accounted unlawful.² According to the Egyptians, it was not Amasis who was thus treated, but another of their nation who was of about the same height. The Persians, believing this man's body to be the king's, abused it in the fashion described above. Amasis, they say, was warned by an oracle of what would happen to him after his death: in order, therefore, to prevent the impending fate, he buried the body, which afterwards received the blows, inside his own tomb near the entrance, commanding his son to bury him, when he died, in the furthest recess of the same sepulchre. For my own part I do not believe that these orders were ever given by Amasis; the Egyptians, as it seems to me, falsely assert it, to save their own dignity.

17. After this Cambyzes took counsel with himself, and planned three expeditions. One was against the Carthaginians, another against the Ammonians, and a third against the long-lived Ethiopians, who dwelt in that part of Libya which borders upon the southern sea.³ He judged it best to despatch his fleet against Carthage and to send some portion of his land army to act against the Ammonians, while his spies went into Ethiopia, under the pretence of carrying presents to the king, but in reality

¹ On this point see above, i. 131.

² The Egyptians were averse to burning a body, not only because burning was considered the punishment of the wicked, but because it was opposed to all their prejudices in favour of its preservation. If they really believed in the return of the soul to the body, this would be an additional reason.

³ Not only in this passage, but again, *infra*, ch. 114, they are said to dwell towards the south, *at the furthest limits of Africa*. Their country must have lain, therefore, beyond the Straits of Babel-mandeb.

to take note of all they saw, and especially to observe whether there was really what is called "the table of the Sun" in Ethiopia.

18. Now the table of the Sun according to the accounts given of it may be thus described:—It is a meadow in the skirts of their city full of the boiled flesh ¹ of all manner of beasts, which the magistrates are careful to store with meat every night, and where whoever likes may come and eat during the day. The people of the land say that the earth itself brings forth the food. Such is the description which is given of this table.

19. When Cambyses had made up his mind that the spies should go, he forthwith sent to Elephantiné for certain of the Ichthyophagi who were acquainted with the Ethiopian tongue; and, while they were being fetched, issued orders to his fleet to sail against Carthage. But the Phœnicians said they would not go, since they were bound to the Carthaginians by solemn oaths, and since besides it would be wicked in them to make war on their own children. Now when the Phœnicians refused, the rest of the fleet was unequal to the undertaking; and so it was that the Carthaginians escaped, and were not enslaved by the Persians. Cambyses thought not right to force the war upon the Phœnicians, because they had yielded themselves to the Persians,² and because upon the Phœnicians all his sea-service depended. The Cyprians had also joined the Persians of their own accord, and took part with them in the expedition against Egypt.

20. As soon as the Ichthyophagi arrived from Elephantiné, Cambyses, having told them what they were to say, forthwith despatched them into Ethiopia with these following gifts: to wit, a purple robe,³ a gold chain for the neck, armlets, an alabaster box of myrrh, and a cask of palm wine. The Ethiopians to whom this embassy was sent, are said to be the tallest ⁴

¹ This was less common in early times, and as Athenæus says, the heroes in Homer seldom "boil their meat, or dress it with sauces;" but in Egypt as well as in Ethiopia boiled meat was eaten, though the Egyptians more frequently roasted it, and boiled their fish. With the Arabs the custom of boiling meat seems to be very ancient.

² It has been usual to ascribe the conquest of Phœnicia to Cyrus. But, according to *Herodotus*, the acquisition belongs to the reign of Cambyses.

³ Various opinions have been held about the origin of the Tyrian purple. The murex is generally supposed to have given it. A shell-fish (*Helix Ianthina*) is found on the coast, about Tyre and Beyroot, which is remarkable for its throwing out a quantity of purple liquid when approached, in order (like the sepia) to conceal itself.

⁴ Vide *infra*. iii. 114; and compare Isaiah xlv. 14.

and handsomest men in the whole world. In their customs they differ greatly from the rest of mankind, and particularly in the way they choose their kings; for they find out the man who is the tallest of all the citizens, and of strength equal to his height, and appoint him to rule over them.

21. The Ichthyophagi on reaching this people, delivered the gifts to the king of the country, and spoke as follows:—"Cambyses, king of the Persians, anxious to become thy ally and sworn friend, has sent us to hold converse with thee, and to bear thee the gifts thou seest, which are the things wherein he himself delights the most." Hereon the Ethiopian, who knew they came as spies, made answer:—"The king of the Persians sent you not with these gifts because he much desired to become my sworn friend—nor is the account which ye give of yourselves true, for ye are come to search out my kingdom. Also your king is not a just man—for were he so, he had not coveted a land which is not his own, nor brought slavery on a people who never did him any wrong. Bear him this bow, and say,—‘The king of the Ethiops thus advises the king of the Persians—when the Persians can pull a bow of this strength thus easily, then let him come with an army of superior strength against the long-lived Ethiopians—till then, let him thank the gods that they have not put it into the heart of the sons of the Ethiops to covet countries which do not belong to them.’"

22. So speaking, he unstrung the bow, and gave it into the hands of the messengers. Then, taking the purple robe, he asked them what it was, and how it had been made. They answered truly, telling him concerning the purple, and the art of the dyer—whereat he observed, "that the men were deceitful, and their garments also." Next he took the neck-chain and the armlets, and asked about them. So the Ichthyophagi explained their use as ornaments. Then the king laughed, and fancying they were fetters, said, "the Ethiopians had much stronger ones." Thirdly, he inquired about the myrrh, and when they told him how it was made and rubbed upon the limbs, he said the same as he had said about the robe. Last of all he came to the wine, and having learnt their way of making it, he drank a draught, which greatly delighted him; whereupon he asked what the Persian king was wont to eat, and to what age the longest-lived of the Persians had been known to attain. They told him that the king ate bread, and described the nature of wheat—adding that eighty years was the longest term of

man's life among the Persians. Hereat he remarked, "It did not surprise him, if they fed on dirt, that they died so soon; indeed he was sure they never would have lived so long as eighty years, except for the refreshment they got from that drink (meaning the wine), wherein he confessed the Persians surpassed the Ethiopians."

23. The Ichthyophagi then in their turn questioned the king concerning the term of life, and diet of his people, and were told that most of them lived to be a hundred and twenty years old, while some even went beyond that age—they ate boiled flesh, and had for their drink nothing but milk. When the Ichthyophagi showed wonder at the number of the years, he led them to a fountain, wherein when they had washed, they found their flesh all glossy and sleek, as if they had bathed in oil—and a scent came from the spring like that of violets. The water was so weak, they said, that nothing would float in it, neither wood, nor any lighter substance, but all went to the bottom. If the account of this fountain be true, it would be their constant use of the water from it which makes them so long-lived. When they quitted the fountain the king led them to a prison, where the prisoners were all of them bound with fetters of gold. Among these Ethiopians copper is of all metals the most scarce and valuable. After they had seen the prison, they were likewise shown what is called "the table of the Sun."

24. Also, last of all, they were allowed to behold the coffins of the Ethiopians, which are made (according to report) of crystal, after the following fashion:—When the dead body has been dried, either in the Egyptian, or in some other manner, they cover the whole with gypsum, and adorn it with painting until it is as like the living man as possible. Then they place the body in a crystal pillar which has been hollowed out to receive it, crystal being dug up in great abundance in their country, and of a kind very easy to work. You may see the corpse through the pillar within which it lies; and it neither gives out any unpleasant odour, nor is it in any respect unseemly; yet there is no part that is not as plainly visible as if the body was bare. The next of kin keep the crystal pillar in their houses for a full year from the time of the death, and give it the first fruits continually, and honour it with sacrifice. After the year is out they bear the pillar forth, and set it up near the town.

25. When the spies had now seen everything, they returned

back to Egypt, and made report to Cambyses, who was stirred to anger by their words. Forthwith he set out on his march against the Ethiopians without having made any provision for the sustenance of his army, or reflected that he was about to wage war in the uttermost parts of the earth. Like a senseless madman as he was, no sooner did he receive the report of the Ichthyophagi than he began his march, bidding the Greeks who were with his army remain where they were, and taking only his land force with him. At Thebes, which he passed through on his way, he detached from his main body some fifty thousand men, and sent them against the Ammonians with orders to carry the people into captivity, and burn the oracle of Jupiter. Meanwhile he himself went on with the rest of his forces against the Ethiopians. Before, however, he had accomplished one-fifth part of the distance, all that the army had in the way of provisions failed; whereupon the men began to eat the sumpter beasts, which shortly failed also. If then, at this time, Cambyses, seeing what was happening, had confessed himself in the wrong, and led his army back, he would have done the wisest thing that he could after the mistake made at the outset; but as it was, he took no manner of heed, but continued to march forwards. So long as the earth gave them anything, the soldiers sustained life by eating the grass and herbs; but when they came to the bare sand, a portion of them were guilty of a horrid deed: by tens they cast lots for a man, who was slain to be the food of the others. When Cambyses heard of these doings, alarmed at such cannibalism, he gave up his attack on Ethiopia, and retreating by the way he had come, reached Thebes, after he had lost vast numbers of his soldiers. From Thebes he marched down to Memphis, where he dismissed the Greeks, allowing them to sail home. And so ended the expedition against Ethiopia.¹

26. The men sent to attack the Ammonians, started from Thebes, having guides with them, and may be clearly traced as far as the city Oasis,² which is inhabited by Samians, said to be of the tribe Æschrionia. The place is distant from Thebes

¹ The communication between Egypt and Ethiopia was such as to render the expedition easy. Its chief object would be the conquest of Meroë.

² The city Oasis is taken, with much reason, for the modern *El Khargeh*, the chief town of what is called the great Oasis. This is distant, by one road 42, by another 52 hours (6 and 7½ days' journey respectively), from ancient Thebes. The Egyptians in the time of Herodotus may have given the name Oasis to the city, as well as to the tract surrounding it.

seven days' journey across the sand, and is called in our tongue "the Island of the Blessed." Thus far the army is known to have made its way; but thenceforth nothing is to be heard of them, except what the Ammonians, and those who get their knowledge from them, report. It is certain they neither reached the Ammonians, nor even came back to Egypt. Further than this, the Ammonians relate as follows:—That the Persians set forth from Oasis across the sand, and had reached about half way between that place and themselves, when, as they were at their midday meal, a wind arose from the south, strong and deadly, bringing with it vast columns of whirling sand, which entirely covered up the troops, and caused them wholly to disappear. Thus, according to the Ammonians, did it fare with this army.

27. About the time when Cambyses arrived at Memphis, Apis appeared to the Egyptians. Now Apis is the god whom the Greeks call Epaphus.¹ As soon as he appeared, straightway all the Egyptians arrayed themselves in their gayest garments, and fell to feasting and jollity: which when Cambyses saw, making sure that these rejoicings were on account of his own ill success, he called before him the officers who had charge of Memphis, and demanded of them,—“Why, when he was in Memphis before, the Egyptians had done nothing of this kind, but waited until now, when he had returned with the loss of so many of his troops?” The officers made answer, “That one of their gods had appeared to them, a god who at long intervals of time had been accustomed to show himself in Egypt—and that always on his appearance the whole of Egypt feasted and kept jubilee.” When Cambyses heard this, he told them that they lied, and as liars he condemned them all to suffer death.

28. When they were dead, he called the priests to his presence, and questioning them received the same answer; whereupon he observed, “That he would soon know whether a tame god had really come to dwell in Egypt”—and straightway, without another word, he bade them bring Apis to him. So they went out from his presence to fetch the god. Now this Apis, or Epaphus, is the calf of a cow which is never afterwards able to bear young. The Egyptians say that fire comes down from heaven upon the cow, which thereupon conceives Apis. The calf which is so called has the following marks:—He is black, with a square spot of white upon his forehead, and on his back

¹ Vide supra, ii. 153.

the figure of an eagle; the hairs in his tail are double, and there is a beetle upon his tongue.¹

29. When the priests returned bringing Apis with them, Cambyzes, like the harebrained person that he was, drew his dagger, and aimed at the belly of the animal, but missed his mark, and stabbed him in the thigh. Then he laughed, and said thus to the priests:—"Oh! blockheads, and think ye that gods become like this, of flesh and blood, and sensible to steel? A fit god indeed for Egyptians, such an one! But it shall cost you dear that you have made me your laughing-stock." When he had so spoken, he ordered those, whose business it was,² to scourge the priests, and if they found any of the Egyptians keeping festival to put them to death. Thus was the feast stopped throughout the land of Egypt, and the priests suffered punishment. Apis, wounded in the thigh, lay some time pining in the temple; at last he died of his wound, and the priests buried him secretly without the knowledge of Cambyzes.

30. And now Cambyzes, who even before had not been quite in his right mind, was forthwith, as the Egyptians say, smitten with madness³ for this crime. The first of his outrages was the slaying of Smerdis, his full brother,⁴ whom he had sent back to Persia from Egypt out of envy, because he drew the bow brought from the Ethiopians by the Ichthyophagi (which none of the other Persians were able to bend) the distance of two fingers' breadth.⁵ When Smerdis was departed into Persia, Cambyzes had a vision in his sleep—he thought a messenger from Persia came to him with tidings that Smerdis sat upon the

¹ Apis was supposed to be the image of the soul of Osiris, and he was the sacred emblem of that God; but he is sometimes figured as a man with a bull's head.

² Like the Turks, and other orientals, the Persians had certain persons whose duty it was to inflict the bastinado and other punishments. The conduct of the Egyptians to their enemies contrasts favourably with that of the Eastern people of antiquity; for they only cut off the hands of the dead, and laid them in "heaps" before the king (cp. 1 Kings x. 8, and 1 Sam. xviii. 27), as returns of the enemy's killed; and if their captives were obliged to work, this was only the condition on which life was preserved in early times; and we see no systematic tortures inflicted, and no cruelties beyond accidental harsh treatment by some ignorant soldier, not unknown in the wars of Christian Europe.

³ The madness of Cambyzes has been generally accepted by our writers. But, as Heeren long ago observed, "we ought to be particularly on our guard against the evil that is related of Cambyzes, inasmuch as our information is derived entirely from his enemies, the Egyptian priests."

⁴ In the original, "both of the same father and of the same mother."

⁵ This is contradicted by the Inscription, which records that Smerdis was put to death *before Cambyzes started for Egypt*.

royal throne, and with his head touched the heavens. Fearing therefore for himself, and thinking it likely that his brother would kill him, and rule in his stead, Cambyses sent into Persia Prexaspes, whom he trusted beyond all the other Persians, bidding him put Smerdis to death. So this Prexaspes went up to Susa¹ and slew Smerdis. Some say he killed him as they hunted together, others, that he took him down to the Erythræan Sea, and there drowned him.²

31. This, it is said, was the first outrage which Cambyses committed. The second was the slaying of his sister, who had accompanied him into Egypt, and lived with him as his wife, though she was his full sister,³ the daughter both of his father and his mother. The way wherein he had made her his wife was the following:—It was not the custom of the Persians, before his time, to marry their sisters—but Cambyses, happening to fall in love with one of his, and wishing to take her to wife, as he knew that it was an uncommon thing, called together the royal judges, and put it to them, “whether there was any law which allowed a brother, if he wished, to marry his sister?” Now the royal judges are certain picked men among the Persians, who hold their office for life, or until they are found guilty of some misconduct. By them justice is administered in Persia, and they are the interpreters of the old laws, all disputes being referred to their decision. When Cambyses, therefore, put his question to these judges, they gave him an answer which was at once true and safe—“they did not find any law,” they said, “allowing a brother to take his sister to wife, but they found a law, that the king of the Persians might do whatever he pleased.” And so they neither warped the law through fear of Cambyses, nor ruined themselves by over stiffly maintaining the law; but they brought another quite distinct law to the king’s help, which allowed him to have his wish.⁴ Cambyses, therefore,

¹ From this passage, as well as from several others (chs. 65, 70, etc.), it would appear that Susa had become the chief residence of the Persian court as early as the time of Cambyses.

² The Inscription expressly confirms the fact of the putting to death of Smerdis by his brother, and also states that the death was not generally known.

³ The Egyptians were permitted to marry their sisters by the same father and mother. Both were forbidden by the Levitical law; but in Patriarchal times a man was permitted to marry a sister, the daughter of his father only (Gen. xx. 12). The Egyptian custom is one of those pointed at in Levit. xviii. 3.

⁴ It is scarcely necessary to point out the agreement between the view of Persian law here disclosed, and that furnished by Dan. ch. vi.—“The law of the Medes and Persians alters not.”

married the object of his love,¹ and no long time afterwards he took to wife another sister. It was the younger of these who went with him into Egypt, and there suffered death at his hands.

32. Concerning the manner of her death, as concerning that of Smerdis,² two different accounts are given. The story which the Greeks tell, is, that Cambyses had set a young dog to fight the cub of a lioness—his wife looking on at the time. Now the dog was getting the worse, when a pup of the same litter broke his chain, and came to his brother's aid—then the two dogs together fought the lion, and conquered him. The thing greatly pleased Cambyses, but his sister who was sitting by shed tears. When Cambyses saw this, he asked her why she wept: whereon she told him, that seeing the young dog come to his brother's aid made her think of Smerdis, whom there was none to help. For this speech, the Greeks say, Cambyses put her to death. But the Egyptians tell the story thus:—The two were sitting at table, when the sister took a lettuce, and stripping the leaves off, asked her brother "when he thought the lettuce looked the prettiest—when it had all its leaves on, or now that it was stripped?" He answered, "When the leaves were on." "But thou," she rejoined, "hast done as I did to the lettuce, and made bare the house of Cyrus." Then Cambyses was wroth, and sprang fiercely upon her, though she was with child at the time. And so it came to pass that she miscarried and died.

33. Thus mad was Cambyses upon his own kindred, and this either from his usage of Apis, or from some other among the many causes from which calamities are wont to arise. They say that from his birth he was afflicted with a dreadful disease, the disorder which some call "the sacred sickness."³ It would be by no means strange, therefore, if his mind were affected in some degree, seeing that his body laboured under so sore a malady.

34. He was mad also upon others besides his kindred; among the rest, upon Prexaspes, the man whom he esteemed beyond all the rest of the Persians, who carried his messages, and whose

¹ This was Atossa, the mother of Xerxes (vide infra, iii. 88), who was the wife successively of Cambyses, the Pseudo-Smerdis, and Darius Hystaspes.

² Vide supra, ch. 30, sub fin.

³ That the disease known under this name was epilepsy appears from the book of Hippocrates, "On the Sacred Sickness." The Italians still call it "mal benedetto." Its sudden and terrible character caused it to be regarded as a divine visitation.

son held the office—an honour of no small account in Persia—of his cupbearer. Him Cambyses is said to have once addressed as follows:—"What sort of man, Prexaspes, do the Persians think me? What do they say of me?" Prexaspes answered, "Oh! sire, they praise thee greatly in all things but one—they say thou art too much given to love of wine."¹ Such Prexaspes told him was the judgment of the Persians; whereupon Cambyses, full of rage, made answer, "What? they say now that I drink too much wine, and so have lost my senses, and am gone out of my mind! Then their former speeches about me were untrue." For once, when the Persians were sitting with him, and Crœsus was by, he had asked them, "What sort of man they thought him compared to his father Cyrus?" Hereon they had answered, "That he surpassed his father, for he was lord of all that his father ever ruled, and further had made himself master of Egypt, and the sea." Then Crœsus, who was standing near, and disliked the comparison, spoke thus to Cambyses: "In my judgment, O son of Cyrus, thou art not equal to thy father, for thou hast not yet left behind thee such a son as he." Cambyses was delighted when he heard this reply, and praised the judgment of Crœsus.

35. Recollecting these answers, Cambyses spoke fiercely to Prexaspes, saying, "Judge now thyself, Prexaspes, whether the Persians tell the truth, or whether it is not they who are mad for speaking as they do. Look there now at thy son standing in the vestibule—if I shoot and hit him right in the middle of the heart, it will be plain the Persians have no grounds for what they say: if I miss him, then I allow that the Persians are right, and that I am out of my mind." So speaking he drew his bow to the full, and struck the boy, who straightway fell down dead. Then Cambyses ordered the body to be opened, and the wound examined; and when the arrow was found to have entered the heart, the king was quite overjoyed, and said to the father with a laugh, "Now thou seest plainly, Prexaspes, that it is not I who am mad, but the Persians who have lost their senses. I pray thee tell me, sawest thou ever mortal man send an arrow with a better aim?" Prexaspes, seeing that the king was not in his right mind, and fearing for himself, replied, "Oh! my lord, I do not think that God himself could shoot so dexterously." Such was the outrage which Cambyses committed at this time: at

¹ The drinking propensities of the Persians generally have been already noticed by Herodotus (i. 133).

another, he took twelve of the noblest Persians, and, without bringing any charge worthy of death against them, buried them all up to the neck.

36. Hereupon Cræsus the Lydian thought it right to admonish Cambyzes, which he did in these words following:—"Oh! king, allow not thyself to give way entirely to thy youth, and the heat of thy temper, but check and control thyself. It is well to look to consequences, and in forethought is true wisdom. Thou layest hold of men, who are thy fellow-citizens, and, without cause of complaint, slayest them—thou even puttest children to death—bethink thee now, if thou shalt often do things like these, will not the Persians rise in revolt against thee? It is by thy father's wish that I offer thee advice; he charged me strictly to give thee such counsel as I might see to be most for thy good." In thus advising Cambyzes, Cræsus meant nothing but what was friendly. But Cambyzes answered him, "Dost thou presume to offer me advice? Right well thou ruledst thy own country when thou wert a king, and right sage advice thou gavest my father Cyrus, bidding him cross the Araxes and fight the Massagetæ in their own land, when they were willing to have passed over into ours. By thy misdirection of thine own affairs thou broughtest ruin upon thyself, and by thy bad counsel, which he followed, thou broughtest ruin upon Cyrus, my father. But thou shalt not escape punishment now, for I have long been seeking to find some occasion against thee." As he thus spoke, Cambyzes took up his bow to shoot at Cræsus; but Cræsus ran hastily out, and escaped. So when Cambyzes found that he could not kill him with his bow, he bade his servants seize him, and put him to death. The servants, however, who knew their master's humour, thought it best to hide Cræsus; that so, if Cambyzes relented, and asked for him, they might bring him out, and get a reward for having saved his life—if, on the other hand, he did not relent, or regret the loss, they might then despatch him. Not long afterwards, Cambyzes did in fact regret the loss of Cræsus, and the servants, perceiving it, let him know that he was still alive. "I am glad," said he, "that Cræsus lives, but as for you who saved him, ye shall not escape my vengeance, but shall all of you be put to death." And he did even as he had said.

37. Many other wild outrages of this sort did Cambyzes commit, both upon the Persians and the allies, while he still stayed at Memphis; among the rest he opened the ancient

sepulchres, and examined the bodies that were buried in them. He likewise went into the temple of Vulcan, and made great sport of the image. For the image of Vulcan¹ is very like the Pataci² of the Phœnicians, wherewith they ornament the prows of their ships of war. If persons have not seen these, I will explain in a different way—it is a figure resembling that of a pigmy. He went also into the temple of the Cabiri,³ which it is unlawful for any one to enter except the priests, and not only made sport of the images, but even burnt them. They are made like the statue of Vulcan, who is said to have been their father.

38. Thus it appears certain to me, by a great variety of proofs, that Cambyases was raving mad; he would not else have set himself to make a mock of holy rites and long-established usages. For if one were to offer men to choose out of all the customs in the world such as seemed to them the best, they would examine the whole number, and end by preferring their own;⁴ so convinced are they that their own usages far surpass those of all others. Unless, therefore, a man was mad, it is not likely that he would make sport of such matters. That people have this feeling about their laws may be seen by very many proofs: among others, by the following. Darius, after he had got the kingdom, called into his presence certain Greeks who were at hand, and asked—"What he should pay them to eat the bodies of their fathers when they died?" To which they answered, that there was no sum that would tempt them to do such a thing. He then sent for certain Indians, of the race called Callatians, men who eat their fathers,⁵ and asked them, while the Greeks stood by, and knew by the help of an interpreter all that was said—"What he should give them to burn the bodies of their fathers at their decease?" The Indians exclaimed aloud, and bade him forbear such language. Such is

¹ The deformed figure of the Pthah of Memphis doubtless gave rise to the fable of the lameness of the Greek Hephæstus or Vulcan.

² They were dwarf figures of gods, apparently of *any* gods, placed, according to Herodotus, at the prow, according to Hesychius and Suidas, at the poop of a galley. They were probably intended to protect the ship from harm.

³ The Cabiri were Pelasgic gods. [The word is connected with the Semitic *Kebîr*=great.—E. H. B.]

⁴ This just remark of Herodotus is one of many tending to show how unprejudiced and sensible his opinions were; and we may readily absolve him from the folly of believing many of the strange stories he relates, against which indeed he guards himself by saying he merely reports what he hears without giving credit to all himself, or expecting others to do so.

⁵ Vide *infra*, iii. 99, and compare the custom of the Issedonians, iv. 26.

men's wont herein; and Pindar was right, in my judgment, when he said, "Law is the king o'er all."

39. While Cambyzes was carrying on this war in Egypt, the Lacedæmonians likewise sent a force to Samos against Polycrates, the son of Æaces, who had by insurrection made himself master of that island.¹ At the outset he divided the state into three parts, and shared the kingdom with his brothers, Pantagônôtus and Syloson; but later, having killed the former and banished the latter, who was the younger of the two, he held the whole island. Hereupon he made a contract of friendship with Amasis the Egyptian king, sending him gifts, and receiving from him others in return. In a little while his power so greatly increased, that the fame of it went abroad throughout Ionia and the rest of Greece. Wherever he turned his arms, success waited on him. He had a fleet of a hundred penteconters, and bowmen to the number of a thousand.² Herewith he plundered all, without distinction of friend or foe; for he argued that a friend was better pleased if you gave him back what you had taken from him, than if you spared him at the first. He captured many of the islands, and several towns upon the mainland. Among his other doings he overcame the Lesbians in a sea-fight, when they came with all their forces to the help of Miletus, and made a number of them prisoners. These persons, laden with fetters, dug the moat which surrounds the castle at Samos.³

40. The exceeding good fortune of Polycrates did not escape the notice of Amasis, who was much disturbed thereat. When therefore his successes continued increasing, Amasis wrote him the following letter, and sent it to Samos. "Amasis to Polycrates thus sayeth: It is a pleasure to hear of a friend and ally prospering, but thy exceeding prosperity does not cause me joy, forasmuch as I know that the gods are envious. My wish for myself, and for those whom I love, is, to be now successful, and now to meet with a check; thus passing through life amid alternate good and ill, rather than with perpetual good fortune. For never yet did I hear tell of any one succeeding in all his undertakings, who did not meet with calamity at last, and come to utter ruin. Now, therefore, give ear to my words, and meet thy good luck in this way: bethink thee which of all thy treasures thou valuest most and canst least bear to part with;

¹ See below, ch. 120.

² These bowmen were Samians.

³ The *town* Samos, not the island, is of course here meant. The islands of the Egean almost all derived their name from their chief city.

take it, whatsoever it be, and throw it away, so that it may be sure never to come any more into the sight of man. Then, if thy good fortune be not thenceforth chequered with ill, save thyself from harm by again doing as I have counselled."

41. When Polycrates read this letter, and perceived that the advice of Amasis was good, he considered carefully with himself which of the treasures that he had in store it would grieve him most to lose. After much thought he made up his mind that it was a signet-ring which he was wont to wear, an emerald set in gold,¹ the workmanship of Theodore, son of Têlecles, a Samian. So he determined to throw this away; and, manning a penteconter, he went on board, and bade the sailors put out into the open sea. When he was now a long way from the island, he took the ring from his finger, and, in the sight of all those who were on board, flung it into the deep. This done, he returned home, and gave vent to his sorrow.

42. Now it happened five or six days afterwards that a fisherman caught a fish so large and beautiful that he thought it well deserved to be made a present of to the king. So he took it with him to the gate of the palace, and said that he wanted to see Polycrates. Then Polycrates allowed him to come in, and the fisherman gave him the fish with these words following—"Sir king, when I took this prize, I thought I would not carry it to market, though I am a poor man who live by my trade. I said to myself, it is worthy of Polycrates and his greatness; and so I brought it here to give it to you." The speech pleased the king, who thus spoke in reply:—"Thou didst right well, friend, and I am doubly indebted, both for the gift, and for the speech. Come now, and sup with me." So the fisherman went home, esteeming it a high honour that he had been asked to sup with the king. Meanwhile the servants, on cutting open the fish, found the signet of their master in its belly. No sooner did they see it than they seized upon it, and, hastening to Polycrates with great joy, restored it to him, and told him in what way it had been found. The king, who saw something providential in the matter, forthwith wrote a letter to Amasis, telling him all that had happened, what he had himself done, and what had been the upshot—and despatched the letter to Egypt.

43. When Amasis had read the letter of Polycrates, he perceived that it does not belong to man to save his fellow-man

¹ The story of the fisherman and the ring has been adopted by the Arabs with variations. [Cf. Macculloch, *The Childhood of Fiction*, p. 201.—E. H. B.]

from the fate which is in store for him; likewise he felt certain that Polycrates would end ill, as he prospered in everything, even finding what he had thrown away. So he sent a herald to Samos, and dissolved the contract of friendship. This he did, that when the great and heavy misfortune came, he might escape the grief which he would have felt if the sufferer had been his bond-friend.

44. It was with this Polycrates, so fortunate in every undertaking, that the Lacedæmonians now went to war. Certain Samians, the same who afterwards founded the city of Cydonia in Crete,¹ had earnestly intreated their help. For Polycrates, at the time when Cambyses, son of Cyrus, was gathering together an armament against Egypt, had sent to beg him not to omit to ask aid from Samos; whereupon Cambyses with much readiness despatched a messenger to the island, and made request that Polycrates would give some ships to the naval force which he was collecting against Egypt. Polycrates straightway picked out from among the citizens such as he thought most likely to stir revolt against him, and manned with them forty triremes, which he sent to Cambyses, bidding him keep the men safe, and never allow them to return home.

45. Now some accounts say that these Samians did not reach Egypt; for that when they were off Carpathus,² they took counsel together and resolved to sail no further. But others maintain that they did go to Egypt, and, finding themselves watched, deserted, and sailed back to Samos. There Polycrates went out against them with his fleet, and a battle was fought and gained by the exiles; after which they disembarked upon the island and engaged the land forces of Polycrates, but were defeated, and so sailed off to Lacedæmon. Some relate that the Samians from Egypt overcame Polycrates, but it seems to me untruly; for had the Samians been strong enough to conquer Polycrates by themselves, they would not have needed to call in the aid of the Lacedæmonians. And moreover, it is not likely that a king who had in his pay so large a body of foreign mercenaries, and maintained likewise such a force of native bowmen, would have been worsted by an army so small as that of the returned Samians. As for his own subjects, to hinder them from betraying him and joining the exiles, Polycrates shut up

¹ *Infra*, ch. 59.

² Carpathus, the modern *Scarpanto*, half-way between Rhodes and Crete, would lie directly in the passage from Samos to Egypt.

their wives and children in the sheds built to shelter his ships, and was ready to burn sheds and all in case of need.

46. When the banished Samians reached Sparta, they had audience of the magistrates, before whom they made a long speech, as was natural with persons greatly in want of aid. Accordingly at this first sitting the Spartans answered them, that they had forgotten the first half of their speech, and could make nothing of the remainder. Afterwards the Samians had another audience, whereat they simply said, showing a bag which they had brought with them, "The bag wants flour." The Spartans answered that they did not need to have said "the bag;" however, they resolved to give them aid.

47. Then the Lacedæmonians made ready and set forth to the attack of Samos, from a motive of gratitude, if we may believe the Samians, because the Samians had once sent ships to their aid against the Messenians; but as the Spartans themselves say, not so much from any wish to assist the Samians who begged their help, as from a desire to punish the people who had seized the bowl which they sent to Cræsus,¹ and the corselet which Amasis, king of Egypt, sent as a present to them. The Samians made prize of this corselet the year before they took the bowl—it was of linen, and had a vast number of figures of animals inwoven into its fabric, and was likewise embroidered with gold and tree-wool.² What is most worthy of admiration in it is, that each of the twists, although of fine texture, contains within it three hundred and sixty threads, all of them clearly visible. The corselet which Amasis gave to the temple of Minerva in Lindus is just such another.³

48. The Corinthians likewise right willingly lent a helping hand towards the expedition against Samos; for a generation earlier, about the time of the seizure of the wine-bowl,⁴ they too had suffered insult at the hands of the Samians. It happened that Periander, son of Cypselus, had taken three hundred boys, children of the chief nobles among the Corcyraeans, and sent them to Alyattes for eunuchs; the men who had them in charge touched at Samos on their way to Sardis; whereupon the Samians, having found out what was to become of the boys

¹ Vide supra, i. 70.

² This is the name by which Herodotus designates "cotton," as is plain from ch. 106 of this Book, and from Book vii. ch. 65.

³ Vide supra, ii. 182.

⁴ On the strength of this passage and another (v. 94), I should think it probable that Periander's reign came down at least as low as B.C. 567.

when they reached that city, first prompted them to take sanctuary at the temple of Diana; and after this, when the Corinthians, as they were forbidden to tear the suppliants from the holy place, sought to cut off from them all supplies of food, invented a festival in their behoof, which they celebrate to this day with the self-same rites. Each evening, as night closed in, during the whole time that the boys continued there, choirs of youths and virgins were placed about the temple, carrying in their hands cakes made of sesame and honey, in order that the Corcyræan boys might snatch the cakes, and so get enough to live upon.

49. And this went on for so long, that at last the Corinthians who had charge of the boys gave them up, and took their departure, upon which the Samians conveyed them back to Corcyra. If now, after the death of Periander, the Corinthians and Corcyræans had been good friends, it is not to be imagined that the former would ever have taken part in the expedition against Samos for such a reason as this; but as, in fact, the two people have always, ever since the first settlement of the island, been enemies to one another, this outrage was remembered, and the Corinthians bore the Samians a grudge for it. Periander had chosen the youths from among the first families in Corcyra, and sent them a present to Alyattes, to revenge a wrong which he had received. For it was the Corcyræans who began the quarrel and injured Periander by an outrage of a horrid nature.

50. After Periander had put to death his wife Melissa, it chanced that on this first affliction a second followed of a different kind. His wife had borne him two sons, and one of them had now reached the age of seventeen, the other of eighteen years, when their mother's father, Procles, tyrant of Epidaurus, asked them to his court. They went, and Procles treated them with much kindness, as was natural, considering they were his own daughter's children. At length, when the time for parting came, Procles, as he was sending them on their way, said, "Know you now, my children, who it was that caused your mother's death?" The elder son took no account of this speech, but the younger, whose name was Lycophron, was sorely troubled at it—so much so, that when he got back to Corinth, looking upon his father as his mother's murderer, he would neither speak to him, nor answer when spoken to, nor utter a word in reply to all his questionings. So Periander at last, growing furious at such behaviour, banished him from his house.

51. The younger son gone, he turned to the elder and asked him, "what it was that their grandfather had said to them?" Then he related in how kind and friendly a fashion he had received them; but, not having taken any notice of the speech which Procles had uttered at parting, he quite forgot to mention it. Periander insisted that it was not possible this should be all—their grandfather must have given them some hint or other—and he went on pressing him, till at last the lad remembered the parting speech and told it. Periander, after he had turned the whole matter over in his thoughts, and felt unwilling to give way at all, sent a messenger to the persons who had opened their houses to his outcast son, and forbade them to harbour him. Then the boy, when he was chased from one friend, sought refuge with another, but was driven from shelter to shelter by the threats of his father, who menaced all those that took him in, and commanded them to shut their doors against him. Still, as fast as he was forced to leave one house he went to another, and was received by the inmates; for his acquaintance, although in no small alarm, yet gave him shelter, as he was Periander's son.

52. At last Periander made proclamation that whoever harboured his son or even spoke to him, should forfeit a certain sum of money to Apollo. On hearing this no one any longer liked to take him in, or even to hold converse with him, and he himself did not think it right to seek to do what was forbidden; so, abiding by his resolve, he made his lodging in the public porticos. When four days had passed in this way, Periander, seeing how wretched his son was, that he neither washed nor took any food, felt moved with compassion towards him; wherefore, foregoing his anger, he approached him, and said, "Which is better, oh! my son, to fare as now thou farest, or to receive my crown and all the good things that I possess, on the one condition of submitting thyself to thy father? See, now, though my own child, and lord of this wealthy Corinth, thou hast brought thyself to a beggar's life, because thou must resist and treat with anger him whom it least behoves thee to oppose. If there has been a calamity, and thou bearest me ill will on that account, bethink thee that I too feel it, and am the greatest sufferer, in as much as it was by me that the deed was done. For thyself, now that thou knowest how much better a thing it is to be envied than pitied, and how dangerous it is to indulge anger against parents and superiors, come back with me to thy

home." With such words as these did Periander chide his son; but the son made no reply, except to remind his father that he was indebted to the god in the penalty for coming and holding converse with him. Then Periander knew that there was no cure for the youth's malady, nor means of overcoming it; so he prepared a ship and sent him away out of his sight to Corcyra, which island at that time belonged to him. As for Procles, Periander, regarding him as the true author of all his present troubles, went to war with him as soon as his son was gone, and not only made himself master of his kingdom Epidaurus, but also took Procles himself, and carried him into captivity.

53. As time went on, and Periander came to be old, he found himself no longer equal to the oversight and management of affairs. Seeing, therefore, in his eldest son no manner of ability, but knowing him to be dull and blockish, he sent to Corcyra and recalled Lycophron to take the kingdom. Lycophron, however, did not even deign to ask the bearer of this message a question. But Periander's heart was set upon the youth, so he sent again to him, this time by his own daughter, the sister of Lycophron, who would, he thought, have more power to persuade him than any other person. Then she, when she reached Corcyra, spoke thus with her brother:—"Dost thou wish the kingdom, brother, to pass into strange hands, and our father's wealth to be made a prey, rather than thyself return to enjoy it? Come back home with me, and cease to punish thyself. It is scant gain, this obstinacy. Why seek to cure evil by evil? Mercy, remember, is by many set above justice. Many, also, while pushing their mother's claims have forfeited their father's fortune. Power is a slippery thing—it has many suitors; and he is old and stricken in years—let not thy own inheritance go to another." Thus did the sister, who had been tutored by Periander what to say, urge all the arguments most likely to have weight with her brother. He however made answer, "That so long as he knew his father to be still alive, he would never go back to Corinth." When the sister brought Periander this reply, he sent to his son a third time by a herald, and said he would come himself to Corcyra, and let his son take his place at Corinth as heir to his kingdom. To these terms Lycophron agreed; and Periander was making ready to pass into Corcyra and his son to return to Corinth, when the Corcyræans, being informed of what was taking place, to keep Periander away, put the young man to

death.¹ For this reason it was that Periander took vengeance on the Corcyræans.

54. The Lacedæmonians arrived before Samos with a mighty armament, and forthwith laid siege to the place. In one of the assaults upon the walls, they forced their way to the top of the tower which stands by the sea on the side where the suburb is, but Polycrates came in person to the rescue with a strong force, and beat them back. Meanwhile at the upper tower, which stood on the ridge of the hill, the besieged, both mercenaries and Samians, made a sally; but after they had withstood the Lacedæmonians a short time, they fled backwards, and the Lacedæmonians, pressing upon them, slew numbers.

55. If now all who were present had behaved that day like Archias and Lycôpas, two of the Lacedæmonians, Samos might have been taken. For these two heroes, following hard upon the flying Samians, entered the city along with them, and, being all alone, and their retreat cut off, were slain within the walls of the place. I myself once fell in with the grandson of this Archias, a man named Archias like his grandsire, and the son of Samius, whom I met at Pitana, to which canton he belonged. He respected the Samians beyond all other foreigners, and he told me that his father was called Samius, because his grandfather Archias died in Samos so gloriously, and that the reason why he respected the Samians so greatly was, that his grandsire was buried with public honours by the Samian people.

56. The Lacedæmonians besieged Samos during forty days, but not making any progress before the place, they raised the siege at the end of that time, and returned home to the Peloponnese. There is a silly tale told, that Polycrates struck a quantity of the coin of his country in lead, and, coating it with gold, gave it to the Lacedæmonians, who on receiving it took their departure.²

This was the first expedition into Asia of the Lacedæmonian Dorians.³

¹ The Scholiast on Thucyd. i. 13, states that the naval battle there spoken of as the earliest upon record, took place in a war between Corinth and Corcyra arising out of this murder.

² This tale may have been false, yet it is not without its value. It shows the general opinion of the corruptibility of the Spartans. The peculiar attractions possessed by the *vetitum nefas* may account for the greater openness of the Spartans to bribery than the other Greeks. Traces of this national characteristic appear in other parts of Herodotus's History; for instance, in the story of Mæandrius (iii. 148), in that of Cleomenes (v. 51), and in that of Leotychidas (vi. 72).

³ These words are emphatic. They mark the place which this expedition

57. The Samians who had fought against Polycrates, when they knew that the Lacedæmonians were about to forsake them, left Samos themselves, and sailed to Siphnos.¹ They happened to be in want of money; and the Siphnians at that time were at the height of their greatness, no islanders having so much wealth as they. There were mines of gold and silver in their country, and of so rich a yield, that from a tithe of the ores the Siphnians furnished out a treasury at Delphi which was on a par with the grandest there. What the mines yielded was divided year by year among the citizens. At the time when they formed the treasury, the Siphnians consulted the oracle, and asked whether their good things would remain to them many years. The Pythoness made answer as follows:—

“When the Prytanies’ seat shines white² in the island of Siphnos,
White-browed all the forum—need then of a true seer’s wisdom—
Danger will threat from a wooden host, and a herald in scarlet.”

Now about this time the forum of the Siphnians and their town-hall or prytaneum had been adorned with Parian marble.³

58. The Siphnians, however, were unable to understand the oracle, either at the time when it was given, or afterwards on the arrival of the Samians. For these last no sooner came to anchor off the island than they sent one of their vessels, with an ambassage on board, to the city. All ships in these early times were painted with vermilion;⁴ and this was what the Pythoness had meant when she told them to beware of danger “from a

occupies in the mind of Herodotus. It is an aggression of the Greeks upon Asia, and therefore a passage in the history of the great quarrel between Persia and Greece, for all Asia is the King’s (i. 4).

¹ Siphnos (the modern *Sifanto*) is one of the western Cyclades.

² The mention of whiteness here, and the expression “*then*,” show that the attack was to be made before the Siphnians had had time to colour their buildings. In Herodotus’s time they were evidently painted, but “*then*” they had merely the natural hue of the white marble. The Greek custom of painting their monuments was common from the earliest to the latest times, and traces of colour are found on the Parthenon and other buildings. At first they were covered with painted stucco; and when marble took its place it received the same coloured ornaments, for which it was as well suited as its less durable predecessor.

³ This is the first known instance of the use of Parian marble in ornamental building.

⁴ Yet Homer almost invariably speaks of “black ships” (*νῆες μέλαιναι*). Perhaps, however, there is no contradiction here. For Homer’s ships are “crimson-cheeked,” or “*vermilion*-cheeked.” It would seem that while the hull of the vessel was in the main black, being probably covered with pitch or some similar substance, the sides above the water, which Homer called the “cheeks” of the ship, were red. Herodotus may not mean more than this.

wooden host, and a herald in scarlet." So the ambassadors came ashore and besought the Siphnians to lend them ten talents; but the Siphnians refused, whereupon the Samians began to plunder their lands. Tidings of this reached the Siphnians, who straightway sallied forth to save their crops; then a battle was fought, in which the Siphnians suffered defeat, and many of their number were cut off from the city by the Samians, after which these latter forced the Siphnians to give them a hundred talents.

59. With this money they bought of the Hermionians the island of Hydreia,¹ off the coast of the Peloponnese, and this they gave in trust to the Trœzenians, to keep for them, while they themselves went on to Crete, and founded the city of Cydonia. They had not meant, when they set sail, to settle there, but only to drive out the Zacynthians from the island. However they rested at Cydonia,² where they flourished greatly for five years. It was they who built the various temples that may still be seen at that place, and among them the fane of Dictyna.³ But in the sixth year they were attacked by the Eginetans, who beat them in a sea-fight, and, with the help of the Cretans, reduced them all to slavery. The beaks of their ships, which carried the figure of a wild boar, they sawed off, and laid them up in the temple of Minerva in Egina. The Eginetans took part against the Samians on account of an ancient grudge, since the Samians had first, when Amphicrates was king of Samos, made war on them and done great harm to their island, suffering, however, much damage also themselves. Such was the reason which moved the Eginetans to make this attack.

60. I have dwelt the longer on the affairs of the Samians, because three of the greatest works in all Greece were made by them. One is a tunnel, under a hill one hundred and fifty fathoms high, carried entirely through the base of the hill, with a mouth at either end. The length of the cutting is seven furlongs—the height and width are each eight feet. Along the whole course there is a second cutting, twenty cubits deep and three feet broad, whereby water is brought, through pipes, from

¹ An island about twelve miles long, and only two or three broad, off the coast of the Argolic peninsula.

² Cydonia lay on the northern coast of Crete, towards the western end of the island.

³ Dictyna, or Dictynna, was the same as Britomartis, an ancient goddess of the Cretans. The Greeks usually regarded her as identical with their Artemis (Diana).

an abundant source into the city. The architect of this tunnel was Eupalinus, son of Naustrophus, a Megarian. Such is the first of their great works; the second is a mole in the sea, which goes all round the harbour, near twenty fathoms deep, and in length above two furlongs. The third is a temple; the largest of all the temples known to us,¹ whereof Rhœcus, son of Phileus, a Samian, was first architect. Because of these works I have dwelt the longer on the affairs of Samos.

61. While Cambyses, son of Cyrus, after losing his senses, still lingered in Egypt, two Magi, brothers, revolted against him. One of them had been left in Persia by Cambyses as comptroller of his household; and it was he who began the revolt. Aware that Smerdis was dead, and that his death was hid, and known to few of the Persians, while most believed that he was still alive, he laid his plan, and made a bold stroke for the crown. He had a brother—the same of whom I spoke before as his partner in the revolt—who happened greatly to resemble Smerdis the son of Cyrus, whom Cambyses his brother had put to death. And not only was this brother of his like Smerdis in person, but he also bore the selfsame name, to wit Smerdis. Patizeithes, the other Magus, having persuaded him that he would carry the whole business through, took him and made him sit upon the royal throne. Having so done, he sent heralds through all the land, to Egypt and elsewhere, to make proclamation to the troops that henceforth they were to obey Smerdis the son of Cyrus, and not Cambyses.

62. The other heralds therefore made proclamation as they were ordered, and likewise the herald whose place it was to proceed into Egypt. He, when he reached Agbatana in Syria, finding Cambyses and his army there, went straight into the middle of the host, and standing forth before them all, made the proclamation which Patizeithes the Magus had commanded. Cambyses no sooner heard him, than believing that what the herald said was true, and imagining that he had been betrayed by Prexaspes (who, he supposed, had not put Smerdis to death when sent into Persia for that purpose), he turned his eyes full upon Prexaspes, and said, "Is this the way, Prexaspes, that thou didst my errand?" "Oh! my liege," answered the other, "there is no truth in the tidings that Smerdis thy brother has revolted against thee, nor hast thou to fear in time to come any

¹ Herodotus means no doubt "the largest *Greek* temple," since the Egyptian temples were of much greater size.

quarrel, great or small, with that man. With my own hands I wrought thy will on him, and with my own hands I buried him. If of a truth the dead can leave their graves, expect Astyages the Mede to rise and fight against thee; but if the course of nature be the same as formerly, then be sure no ill will ever come upon thee from this quarter. Now therefore my counsel is, that we send in pursuit of the herald, and strictly question him who it was that charged him to bid us obey king Smerdis."

63. When Prexaspes had so spoken, and Cambyses had approved his words, the herald was forthwith pursued, and brought back to the king. Then Prexaspes said to him, "Sirrah, thou bear'st us a message, sayst thou, from Smerdis, son of Cyrus. Now answer truly, and go thy way scathless. Did Smerdis have thee to his presence and give thee thy orders, or hadst thou them from one of his officers?" The herald answered, "Truly I have not set eyes on Smerdis son of Cyrus, since the day when king Cambyses led the Persians into Egypt. The man who gave me my orders was the Magus that Cambyses left in charge of the household; but he said that Smerdis son of Cyrus sent you the message." In all this the herald spoke nothing but the strict truth. Then Cambyses said thus to Prexaspes:—"Thou art free from all blame, Prexaspes, since, as a right good man, thou hast not failed to do the thing which I commanded. But tell me now, which of the Persians can have taken the name of Smerdis, and revolted from me?" "I think, my liege," he answered, "that I apprehend the whole business. The men who have risen in revolt against thee are the two Magi, Patizeithes, who was left comptroller of thy household, and his brother, who is named Smerdis."

64. Cambyses no sooner heard the name of Smerdis than he was struck with the truth of Prexaspes' words, and the fulfilment of his own dream—the dream, I mean, which he had in former days, when one appeared to him in his sleep and told him that Smerdis sate upon the royal throne, and with his head touched the heavens.¹ So when he saw that he had needlessly slain his brother Smerdis, he wept and bewailed his loss: after which, smarting with vexation as he thought of all his ill luck, he sprang hastily upon his steed, meaning to march his army with all haste to Susa against the Magus. As he made his spring, the button of his sword-sheath fell off, and the bared point

¹ Supra, ch. 30.

entered his thigh, wounding him exactly where he had himself once wounded the Egyptian god Apis.¹ Then Cambyzes, feeling that he had got his death-wound, inquired the name of the place where he was, and was answered, "Agbatana." Now before this it had been told him by the oracle at Buto that he should end his days at Agbatana. He, however, had understood the Median Agbatana, where all his treasures were, and had thought that he should die there in a good old age; but the oracle meant Agbatana in Syria. So when Cambyzes heard the name of the place, the double shock that he had received, from the revolt of the Magus and from his wound, brought him back to his senses. And he understood now the true meaning of the oracle, and said, "Here then Cambyzes, son of Cyrus, is doomed to die."

65. At this time he said no more; but twenty days afterwards he called to his presence all the chief Persians who were with the army, and addressed them as follows:—"Persians, needs must I tell you now what hitherto I have striven with the greatest care to keep concealed. When I was in Egypt I saw in my sleep a vision, which would that I had never beheld! I thought a messenger came to me from my home, and told me that Smerdis sate upon the royal throne, and with his head touched the heavens. Then I feared to be cast from my throne by Smerdis my brother, and I did what was more hasty than wise. Ah! truly, do what they may, it is impossible for men to turn aside the coming fate. I, in my folly, sent Prexaspes to Susa to put my brother to death. So this great woe was accomplished, and I then lived without fear, never imagining that, after Smerdis was dead, I need dread revolt from any other. But herein I had quite mistaken what was about to happen, and so I slew my brother without any need, and nevertheless have lost my crown. For it was Smerdis the Magus, and not Smerdis my brother, of whose rebellion God forewarned me by the vision. The deed is done, however, and Smerdis, son of Cyrus, be sure is lost to you. The Magi have the royal power—Patizeithes, whom I left at Susa to overlook my household, and Smerdis his brother. There was one who would have been bound beyond all others to avenge the wrongs I have suffered from these Magians, but he, alas! has perished by a horrid fate, deprived of life by those nearest and dearest to him. In his default,

¹ The details here are suspicious, since they evidently come from the Egyptian priests, who wish to represent the death of Cambyzes as a judgment upon him for his impiety.

nothing now remains for me but to tell you, O Persians, what I would wish to have done after I have breathed my last. Therefore, in the name of the Gods that watch over our royal house, I charge you all, and specially such of you as are Achæmenids, that ye do not tamely allow the kingdom to go back to the Medes. Recover it one way or another, by force or fraud; by fraud, if it is by fraud that they have seized on it; by force, if force has helped them in their enterprise. Do this, and then may your land bring you forth fruit abundantly, and your wives bear children, and your herds increase, and freedom be your portion for ever: but do it not—make no brave struggle to regain the kingdom—and then my curse be on you, and may the opposite of all these things happen to you—and not only so, but may you, one and all, perish at the last by such a fate as mine!” Then CambySES, when he left speaking, bewailed his whole misfortune from beginning to end.

66. Whereupon the Persians, seeing their king weep, rent the garments that they had on, and uttered lamentable cries; after which, as the bone presently grew carious, and the limb gangrened, CambySES, son of Cyrus, died. He had reigned in all seven years and five months,¹ and left no issue behind him, male or female. The Persians who had heard his words, put no faith in anything that he said concerning the Magi having the royal power; but believed that he spoke out of hatred towards Smerdis, and had invented the tale of his death to cause the whole Persian race to rise up in arms against him. Thus they were convinced that it was Smerdis the son of Cyrus who had rebelled and now sate on the throne. For Prexaspes stoutly denied that he had slain Smerdis, since it was not safe for him, after CambySES was dead, to allow that a son of Cyrus had met with death at his hands.

67. Thus then CambySES died, and the Magus now reigned in security, and passed himself off for Smerdis the son of Cyrus. And so went by the seven months which were wanting to complete the eighth year of CambySES. His subjects, while his reign lasted, received great benefits from him, insomuch that, when he died, all the dwellers in Asia mourned his loss exceedingly, except only the Persians. For no sooner did he come to the throne than forthwith he sent round to every nation under his rule, and granted them freedom from war-service and from taxes for the space of three years.

¹ Vide infra. ch. 67.

68. In the eighth month, however, it was discovered who he was in the mode following. There was a man called Otanes, the son of Pharnaspes, who for rank and wealth was equal to the greatest of the Persians. This Otanes was the first to suspect that the Magus was not Smerdis the son of Cyrus, and to surmise moreover who he really was. He was led to guess the truth by the king never quitting the citadel,¹ and never calling before him any of the Persian noblemen. As soon, therefore, as his suspicions were aroused he adopted the following measures:—One of his daughters, who was called Phædima, had been married to Cambyses, and was taken to wife, together with the rest of Cambyses' wives, by the Magus. To this daughter Otanes sent a message, and inquired of her "who it was whose bed she shared,—was it Smerdis the son of Cyrus, or was it some other man?" Phædima in reply declared she did not know—Smerdis the son of Cyrus she had never seen, and so she could not tell whose bed she shared. Upon this Otanes sent a second time, and said, "If thou dost not know Smerdis son of Cyrus thyself, ask queen Atossa who it is with whom ye both live—she cannot fail to know her own brother." To this the daughter made answer, "I can neither get speech with Atossa, nor with any of the women who lodge in the palace. For no sooner did this man, be he who he may, obtain the kingdom, than he parted us from one another, and gave us all separate chambers."

69. This made the matter seem still more plain to Otanes. Nevertheless he sent a third message to his daughter in these words following:—"Daughter, thou art of noble blood—thou wilt not shrink from a risk which thy father bids thee encounter. If this fellow be not Smerdis the son of Cyrus, but the man whom I think him to be, his boldness in taking thee to be his wife, and lording it over the Persians, must not be allowed to pass unpunished. Now therefore do as I command—when next he passes the night with thee, wait till thou art sure he is fast asleep, and then feel for his ears. If thou findest him to have ears, then believe him to be Smerdis the son of Cyrus, but if he has none, know him for Smerdis the Magian." Phædima returned for answer, "It would be a great risk. If he was without ears, and caught her feeling for them, she well knew he

¹ By the citadel (*ἀκρόπολις*) it is uncertain whether Herodotus means the citadel proper, or the only royal palace at Susa (v. *infr.* ch. 70), called by the Greeks "the Memnonium," which he speaks of below (v. 54), and which was no doubt strongly fortified.

would make away with her—nevertheless she would venture.” So Otanes got his daughter’s promise that she would do as he desired. Now Smerdis the Magian had had his ears cut off in the lifetime of Cyrus son of Cambyses, as a punishment for a crime of no slight heinousness.¹ Phædima therefore, Otanes’ daughter, bent on accomplishing what she had promised her father, when her turn came, and she was taken to the bed of the Magus (in Persia a man’s wives sleep with him in their turns²), waited till he was sound asleep, and then felt for his ears. She quickly perceived that he had no ears; and of this, as soon as day dawned, she sent word to her father.

70. Then Otanes took to him two of the chief Persians, Aspathines and Gobryas,³ men whom it was most advisable to trust in such a matter, and told them everything. Now they had already of themselves suspected how the matter stood. When Otanes therefore laid his reasons before them they at once came into his views; and it was agreed that each of the three should take as companion in the work the Persian in whom he placed the greatest confidence. Then Otanes chose Intaphernes, Gobryas Megabyzus, and Aspathines Hydarnes.⁴ After the number had thus become six, Darius, the son of Hystaspes, arrived at Susa from Persia, whereof his father was governor.⁵ On his coming it seemed good to the six to take him likewise into their counsels.

71. After this, the men, being now seven in all, met together to exchange oaths, and hold discourse with one another. And when it came to the turn of Darius to speak his mind, he said as follows:—“Methought no one but I knew that Smerdis, the son of Cyrus, was not now alive, and that Smerdis the Magian ruled over us; on this account I came hither with speed, to compass the death of the Magian. But as it seems the matter is known to you all, and not to me only, my judgment is that we should act at once, and not any longer delay. For to do so were not well.” Otanes spoke upon this:—“Son of Hystaspes,” said he, “thou art the child of a brave father, and seemest likely to

¹ See, below, the story of Zopyrus, which implies that such mutilation was an ordinary punishment (*infra*, chs. 154-158).

² Compare Esther ii. 12.

³ Gobryas appears to have been the bow-bearer of Darius. Such an office might, I think, have been held by a Persian of very exalted rank.

⁴ He was employed by Darius on occasion of the Median revolt, and gained a great victory over the Medes in their own country.

⁵ The curious fact, that Darius became king in his father’s lifetime, is confirmed by the Behistun Inscription.

show thyself as bold a gallant as he. Beware, however, of rash haste in this matter; do not hurry so, but proceed with soberness. We must add to our number ere we adventure to strike the blow." "Not so," Darius rejoined; "for let all present be well assured, that if the advice of Otanes guide our acts, we shall perish most miserably. Some one will betray our plot to the Magians for lucre's sake. Ye ought to have kept the matter to yourselves, and so made the venture; but as ye have chosen to take others into your secret, and have opened the matter to me, take my advice and make the attempt to-day—or if not, if a single day be suffered to pass by, be sure that I will let no one betray me to the Magian. I myself will go to him, and plainly denounce you all."

72. Otanes, when he saw Darius so hot, replied, "But if thou wilt force us to action, and not allow a day's delay, tell us, I pray thee, how we shall get entrance into the palace, so as to set upon them. Guards are placed everywhere, as thou thyself well knowest—for if thou hast not seen, at least thou hast heard tell of them. How are we to pass these guards, I ask thee?" "Otanès," answered Darius, "there are many things easy enough in act, which by speech it is hard to explain. There are also things concerning which speech is easy, but no noble action follows when the speech is done. As for these guards, ye know well that we shall not find it hard to make our way through them. Our rank alone would cause them to allow us to enter,—shame and fear alike forbidding them to say us nay. But besides, I have the fairest plea that can be conceived for gaining admission. I can say that I have just come from Persia, and have a message to deliver to the king from my father. An untruth must be spoken, where need requires. For whether men lie, or say true, it is with one and the same object. Men lie, because they think to gain by deceiving others; and speak the truth, because they expect to get something by their true speaking, and to be trusted afterwards in more important matters. Thus, though their conduct is so opposite, the end of both is alike. If there were no gain to be got, your true-speaking man would tell untruths as much as your liar, and your liar would tell the truth as much as your true-speaking man. The door-keeper, who lets us in readily, shall have his guerdon some day or other; but woe to the man who resists us, he must forthwith be declared an enemy. Forcing our way past him, we will press in and go straight to our work."

73. After Darius had thus said, Gobryas spoke as follows:—"Dear friends, when will a fitter occasion offer for us to recover the kingdom, or, if we are not strong enough, at least die in the attempt? Consider that we Persians are governed by a Median Magus, and one, too, who has had his ears cut off! Some of you were present when Cambyses lay upon his death-bed—such, doubtless, remember what curses he called down upon the Persians if they made no effort to recover the kingdom. Then, indeed, we paid but little heed to what he said, because we thought he spoke out of hatred, to set us against his brother. Now, however, my vote is, that we do as Darius has counselled—march straight in a body to the palace from the place where we now are, and forthwith set upon the Magian." So Gobryas spake, and the others all approved.

74. While the seven were thus taking counsel together, it so chanced that the following events were happening:—The Magi had been thinking what they had best do, and had resolved for many reasons to make a friend of Prexaspes. They knew how cruelly he had been outraged by Cambyses, who slew his son with an arrow;¹ they were also aware that it was by his hand that Smerdis the son of Cyrus fell, and that he was the only person privy to that prince's death; and they further found him to be held in the highest esteem by all the Persians. So they called him to them, made him their friend, and bound him by a promise and by oaths to keep silence about the fraud which they were practising upon the Persians, and not discover it to any one; and they pledged themselves that in this case they would give him thousands of gifts of every sort and kind.² So Prexaspes agreed; and the Magi, when they found that they had persuaded him so far, went on to another proposal, and said they would assemble the Persians at the foot of the palace wall, and he should mount one of the towers and harangue them from it, assuring them that Smerdis the son of Cyrus, and none but he, ruled the land. This they bade him do, because Prexaspes was a man of great weight with his countrymen, and had often declared in public that Smerdis the son of Cyrus was still alive, and denied being his murderer.

75. Prexaspes said he was quite ready to do their will in the

¹ Vide supra, ch. 35.

² Literally, "ten thousand of every thing;" that is, of every thing which it was customary to give. Similar expressions occur elsewhere in their strict proper sense (see i. 50, iv. 88, ix. 81, etc.); but here the phrase can only be a strong hyperbole.

matter; so the Magi assembled the people, and placed Prexaspes upon the top of the tower, and told him to make his speech. Then this man, forgetting of set purpose all that the Magi had intreated him to say, began with Achæmenes, and traced down the descent of Cyrus; after which, when he came to that king, he recounted all the services that had been rendered by him to the Persians, from whence he went on to declare the truth, which hitherto he had concealed, he said, because it would not have been safe for him to make it known, but now necessity was laid on him to disclose the whole. Then he told how, forced to it by Cambyses, he had himself taken the life of Smerdis, son of Cyrus, and how that Persia was now ruled by the Magi. Last of all, with many curses upon the Persians if they did not recover the kingdom, and wreak vengeance on the Magi, he threw himself headlong from the tower into the abyss below. Such was the end of Prexaspes, a man all his life of high repute among the Persians.

76. And now the seven Persians, having resolved that they would attack the Magi without more delay, first offered prayers to the gods and then set off for the palace, quite unacquainted with what had been done by Prexaspes. The news of his doings reached them upon their way, when they had accomplished about half the distance. Hereupon they turned aside out of the road, and consulted together. Otanes and his party said they must certainly put off the business, and not make the attack when affairs were in such a ferment. Darius, on the other hand, and his friends, were against any change of plan, and wished to go straight on, and not lose a moment. Now, as they strove together, suddenly there came in sight two pairs of vultures, and seven pairs of hawks, pursuing them, and the hawks tore the vultures both with their claws and bills. At this sight the seven with one accord came in to the opinion of Darius, and encouraged by the omen hastened on towards the palace.

77. At the gate they were received as Darius had foretold. The guards, who had no suspicion that they came for any ill purpose, and held the chief Persians in much reverence, let them pass without difficulty—it seemed as if they were under the special protection of the gods—none even asked them any question. When they were now in the great court they fell in with certain of the eunuchs, whose business it was to carry the king's messages, who stopped them and asked what they wanted, while at the same time they threatened the doorkeepers for

having let them enter. The seven sought to press on, but the eunuchs would not suffer them. Then these men, with cheers encouraging one another, drew their daggers, and stabbing those who strove to withstand them, rushed forward to the apartment of the males.

78. Now both the Magi were at this time within, holding counsel upon the matter of Prexaspes. So when they heard the stir among the eunuchs, and their loud cries, they ran out themselves, to see what was happening. Instantly perceiving their danger, they both flew to arms; one had just time to seize his bow, the other got hold of his lance; when straightway the fight began. The one whose weapon was the bow found it of no service at all; the foe was too near, and the combat too close to allow of his using it. But the other made a stout defence with his lance, wounding two of the seven, Aspathines in the leg, and Intaphernes in the eye. This wound did not kill Intaphernes, but it cost him the sight of that eye. The other Magus, when he found his bow of no avail, fled into a chamber which opened out into the apartment of the males, intending to shut to the doors. But two of the seven entered the room with him, Darius and Gobryas. Gobryas seized the Magus and grappled with him, while Darius stood over them, not knowing what to do; for it was dark,¹ and he was afraid that if he struck a blow he might kill Gobryas. Then Gobryas, when he perceived that Darius stood doing nothing, asked him, "why his hand was idle?" "I fear to hurt thee," he answered. "Fear not," said Gobryas; "strike, though it be through both." Darius did as he desired, drove his dagger home, and by good hap killed the Magus.

79. Thus were the Magi slain; and the seven, cutting off both the heads, and leaving their own wounded in the palace, partly because they were disabled, and partly to guard the citadel, went forth from the gates with the heads in their hands, shouting and making an uproar. They called out to all the Persians that they met, and told them what had happened, showing them the heads of the Magi, while at the same time they slew every Magus who fell in their way. Then the Persians, when they knew what the seven had done, and understood the fraud of the Magi, thought it but just to follow the example set them,

¹ The Persian, like the Assyrian palaces, consisted of one or more central halls or courts, probably open to the sky, on which adjoined a number of ceiled chambers of small size, without windows, and only lighted through the doorway, which opened into the court.

and, drawing their daggers, they killed the Magi wherever they could find any. Such was their fury, that, unless night had closed in, not a single Magus would have been left alive. The Persians observe this day with one accord, and keep it more strictly than any other in the whole year. It is then that they hold the great festival, which they call the Magophonia. No Magus may show himself abroad during the whole time that the feast lasts; but all must remain at home the entire day.

80. And now when five days were gone, and the hubbub had settled down, the conspirators met together to consult about the situation of affairs. At this meeting speeches were made, to which many of the Greeks give no credence, but they were made nevertheless.¹ Otanes recommended that the management of public affairs should be entrusted to the whole nation. "To me," he said, "it seems advisable, that we should no longer have a single man to rule over us—the rule of one is neither good nor pleasant. Ye cannot have forgotten to what lengths Cambyzes went in his haughty tyranny, and the haughtiness of the Magi ye have yourselves experienced. How indeed is it possible that monarchy should be a well-adjusted thing, when it allows a man to do as he likes without being answerable? Such licence is enough to stir strange and unwonted thoughts in the heart of the worthiest of men. Give a person this power, and straightway his manifold good things puff him up with pride, while envy is so natural to human kind that it cannot but arise in him. But pride and envy together include all wickedness—both of them leading on to deeds of savage violence. True it is that kings, possessing as they do all that heart can desire, ought to be void of envy; but the contrary is seen in their conduct towards the citizens. They are jealous of the most virtuous among their subjects, and wish their death; while they take delight in the meanest and basest, being ever ready to listen to the tales of slanderers. A king, besides, is beyond all other men inconsistent with himself. Pay him court in moderation, and he is angry because you do not show him more profound respect—show him profound respect, and he is offended again, because (as he says) you fawn on him. But the worst of all is, that he sets aside the laws of the land, puts men to death without trial, and subjects women to violence.

¹ The incredulity of the Greeks is again alluded to (*infra*, vi. 43). No doubt Herodotus had Persian authority for his tale; but it is so utterly at variance with Oriental notions as to be absolutely incredible.

The rule of the many, on the other hand, has, in the first place, the fairest of names, to wit, *isonomy*; ¹ and further it is free from all those outrages which a king is wont to commit. There, places are given by lot, the magistrate is answerable for what he does, and measures rest with the commonalty. I vote, therefore, that we do away with monarchy, and raise the people to power. For the people are all in all."

81. Such were the sentiments of Otanes. Megabyzus spoke next, and advised the setting up of an oligarchy:—"In all that Otanes has said to persuade you to put down monarchy," he observed, "I fully concur; but his recommendation that we should call the people to power seems to me not the best advice. For there is nothing so void of understanding, nothing so full of wantonness, as the unwieldy rabble. It were folly not to be borne, for men, while seeking to escape the wantonness of a tyrant, to give themselves up to the wantonness of a rude unbridled mob. The tyrant, in all his doings, at least knows what is he about, but a mob is altogether devoid of knowledge; for how should there be any knowledge in a rabble, untaught, and with no natural sense of what is right and fit? It rushes wildly into state affairs with all the fury of a stream swollen in the winter, and confuses everything. Let the enemies of the Persians be ruled by democracies; but let us choose out from the citizens a certain number of the worthiest, and put the government into their hands. For thus both we ourselves shall be among the governors, and power being entrusted to the best men, it is likely that the best counsels will prevail in the state."

82. This was the advice which Megabyzus gave, and after him Darius came forward, and spoke as follows:—"All that Megabyzus said against democracy was well said, I think; but about oligarchy he did not speak advisedly; for take these three forms of government—democracy, oligarchy, and monarchy—and let them each be at their best, I maintain that monarchy far surpasses the other two. What government can possibly be better than that of the very best man in the whole state? The counsels of such a man are like himself, and so he governs the mass of the people to their heart's content; while at the same time his measures against evil-doers are kept more secret than in other states. Contrariwise, in oligarchies, where men vie

¹ Modern languages have no single word to express the Greek *ισονομία*, which signified that perfect equality of all civil and political rights which was the fundamental notion of the Greek democracy.

with each other in the service of the commonwealth, fierce enmities are apt to arise between man and man, each wishing to be leader, and to carry his own measures; whence violent quarrels come, which lead to open strife, often ending in bloodshed. Then monarchy is sure to follow; and this too shows how far that rule surpasses all others. Again, in a democracy, it is impossible but that there will be malpractices: these malpractices, however, do not lead to enmities, but to close friendships, which are formed among those engaged in them, who must hold well together to carry on their villainies. And so things go on until a man stands forth as champion of the commonalty, and puts down the evil-doers. Straightway the author of so great a service is admired by all, and from being admired soon comes to be appointed king; so that here too it is plain that monarchy is the best government. Lastly, to sum up all in a word, whence, I ask, was it that we got the freedom which we enjoy?—did democracy give it us, or oligarchy, or a monarch? As a single man recovered our freedom for us, my sentence is that we keep to the rule of one. Even apart from this, we ought not to change the laws of our forefathers when they work fairly; for to do so is not well."

83. Such were the three opinions brought forward at this meeting; the four other Persians voted in favour of the last. Otanes, who wished to give his countrymen a democracy, when he found the decision against him, arose a second time, and spoke thus before the assembly:—"Brother conspirators, it is plain that the king who is to be chosen will be one of ourselves, whether we make the choice by casting lots for the prize, or by letting the people decide which of us they will have to rule over them, in or any other way. Now, as I have neither a mind to rule nor to be ruled, I shall not enter the lists with you in this matter. I withdraw, however, on one condition—none of you shall claim to exercise rule over me or my seed for ever." The six agreed to these terms, and Otanes withdrew and stood aloof from the contest. And still to this day the family of Otanes continues to be the only free family in Persia; those who belong to it submit to the rule of the king only so far as they themselves choose; they are bound, however, to observe the laws of the land like the other Persians.

84. After this the six took counsel together, as to the fairest way of setting up a king: and first, with respect to Otanes, they resolved, that if any of their own number got the kingdom,

Otanes and his seed after him should receive year by year, as a mark of special honour, a Median robe,¹ and all such other gifts as are accounted the most honourable in Persia. And these they resolved to give him, because he was the man who first planned the outbreak, and who brought the seven together. These privileges, therefore, were assigned specially to Otanes. The following were made common to them all:—It was to be free to each, whenever he pleased, to enter the palace unannounced, unless the king were in the company of one of his wives; and the king was to be bound to marry into no family excepting those of the conspirators.² Concerning the appointment of a king, the resolve to which they came was the following:—They would ride out together next morning into the skirts of the city, and he whose steed first neighed after the sun was up should have the kingdom.

85. Now Darius had a groom, a sharp-witted knave, called Æbares. After the meeting had broken up, Darius sent for him, and said, “Æbares, this is the way in which the king is to be chosen—we are to mount our horses, and the man whose horse first neighs after the sun is up is to have the kingdom. If then you have any cleverness, contrive a plan whereby the prize may fall to us, and not go to another.” “Truly, master,” Æbares answered, “if it depends on this whether thou shalt be king or no, set thine heart at ease, and fear nothing: I have a charm which is sure not to fail.” “If thou hast really aught of the kind,” said Darius, “hasten to get it ready. The matter does not brook delay, for the trial is to be to-morrow.” So Æbares when he heard that, did as follows:—When night came, he took one of the mares, the chief favourite of the horse which Darius rode, and tethering it in the suburb, brought his master’s horse to the place; then, after leading him round and round the mare several times, nearer and nearer at each circuit, he ended by letting them come together.

86. And now, when the morning broke, the six Persians, according to agreement, met together on horseback, and rode out to the suburb. As they went along they neared the spot where the mare was tethered the night before, whereupon the horse of Darius sprang forward and neighed. Just at the same time, though the sky was clear and bright, there was a flash of

¹ Garments have at all times been gifts of honour in the East. (Gen. xlv. 22; 2 Kings v. 5; 2 Chron. ix. 24, etc.) The practice continues in the *kaftan* of the present day.

² So far as can be traced, this rule was always observed.

lightning, followed by a thunder-clap. It seemed as if the heavens conspired with Darius, and hereby inaugurated him king: so the five other nobles leaped with one accord from their steeds, and bowed down before him and owned him for their king.

87. This is the account which some of the Persians gave of the contrivance of Œbares; but there are others who relate the matter differently. They say that in the morning he stroked the mare with his hand, which he then hid in his trousers until the sun rose and the horses were about to start, when he suddenly drew his hand forth and put it to the nostrils of his master's horse, which immediately snorted and neighed.

88. Thus was Darius, son of Hystaspes, appointed king; and, except the Arabians, all they of Asia were subject to him; for Cyrus, and after him Cambyses,¹ had brought them all under. The Arabians were never subject as slaves to the Persians, but had a league of friendship with them from the time when they brought Cambyses on his way as he went into Egypt; for had they been unfriendly the Persians could never have made their invasion.

And now Darius contracted marriages² of the first rank, according to the notions of the Persians: to wit, with two daughters of Cyrus, Atossa and Artystône; of whom, Atossa had been twice married before, once to Cambyses, her brother, and once to the Magus, while the other, Artystône, was a virgin. He married also Parmys, daughter of Smerdis, son of Cyrus; and he likewise took to wife the daughter of Otanes, who had made the discovery about the Magus. And now when his power was established firmly throughout all the kingdoms, the first thing that he did was to set up a carving in stone, which showed a man mounted upon a horse, with an inscription in these words following:—"Darius, son of Hystaspes, by aid of his good horse" (here followed the horse's name), "and of his good groom Œbares, got himself the kingdom of the Persians."

89. This he set up in Persia; and afterwards he proceeded to establish twenty governments of the kind which the Persians call satrapies, assigning to each its governor, and fixing the tribute which was to be paid him by the several nations. And

¹ The Phœnicians and Cyprians would be here alluded to—perhaps also the Cilicians.

² Darius had married a daughter of Gobryas before his accession (vii. 2). He also took to wife his niece, Phratagûne, the daughter of his brother Artanes (vii. 224).

generally he joined together in one satrapy the nations that were neighbours, but sometimes he passed over the nearer tribes, and put in their stead those which were more remote. The following is an account of these governments, and of the yearly tribute which they paid to the king:—Such as brought their tribute in silver were ordered to pay according to the Babylonian talent; while the Euboic was the standard measure for such as brought gold. Now the Babylonian talent contains seventy Euboic minæ.¹ During all the reign of Cyrus, and afterwards when Cambyses ruled, there were no fixed tributes, but the nations severally brought gifts to the king. On account of this and other like doings, the Persians say that Darius was a huckster, Cambyses a master, and Cyrus a father; for Darius looked to making a gain in everything; Cambyses was harsh and reckless; while Cyrus was gentle, and procured them all manner of goods.

90. The Ionians, the Magnesians of Asia,² the Æolians, the Carians, the Lycians, the Milyans,³ and the Pamphylians, paid their tribute in a single sum, which was fixed at four hundred talents of silver. These formed together the first satrapy.

The Mysians, Lydians, Lasonians,⁴ Cabalians, and Hygennians paid the sum of five hundred talents. This was the second satrapy.

The Hellespontians, of the right coast as one enters the straits, the Phrygians, the Asiatic Thracians, the Paphlagonians, the Mariandynians, and the Syrians⁵ paid a tribute of three hundred and sixty talents. This was the third satrapy.

The Cilicians gave three hundred and sixty white horses, one for each day in the year,⁶ and five hundred talents of silver. Of this sum one hundred and forty talents went to pay the cavalry which guarded the country, while the remaining three hundred and sixty were received by Darius. This was the fourth satrapy.

¹ Standards of weight probably passed into Greece from Asia, whence the word *mina* (μνᾶ) seems certainly to have been derived. That the standard known to the Greeks as the Euboic was an Asiatic one, is plain from this passage. If the (later) Attic talent was worth £243 15s. of our money, the Euboic (silver) talent would be £250 8s. 5d., and the Babylonian £292 3s. 3d.

² There were two towns of the name of Magnesia in Asia Minor, Magnesia under Sipylus and Magnesia on the Mæander.

³ Vide supra, i. 173.

⁴ In the Seventh Book (ch. 77) Herodotus identifies the Cabalians and the Lasonians.

⁵ That is, the Cappadocians. (Vide supra, i. 72.)

⁶ Compare i. 32, and ii. 4.

91. The country reaching from the city of Posideïum¹ (built by Amphilochnus, son of Amphiaraüs, on the confines of Syria and Cilicia) to the borders of Egypt, excluding therefrom a district which belonged to Arabia, and was free from tax,² paid a tribute of three hundred and fifty talents. All Phœnicia, Palestine Syria, and Cyprus, were herein contained. This was the fifth satrapy.

From Egypt, and the neighbouring parts of Libya, together with the towns of Cyrêné and Barca, which belonged to the Egyptian satrapy, the tribute which came in was seven hundred talents. These seven hundred talents did not include the profits of the fisheries of Lake Mœris, nor the corn furnished to the troops at Memphis. Corn was supplied to 120,000 Persians, who dwelt at Memphis in the quarter called the White Castle, and to a number of auxiliaries. This was the sixth satrapy.

The Sattagydiæ, the Gandariæ, the Dadicæ, and the Aparytæ, who were all reckoned together, paid a tribute of a hundred and seventy talents. This was the seventh satrapy.

Susa, and the other parts of Cissia, paid three hundred talents. This was the eighth satrapy.

92. From Babylonia, and the rest of Assyria, were drawn a thousand talents of silver, and five hundred boy-eunuchs. This was the ninth satrapy.

Agbatana, and the other parts of Media, together with the Paricanians and Orthocorybantes, paid in all four hundred and fifty talents. This was the tenth satrapy.

The Caspiæ, Pausicæ, Pantimathi, and Daritæ, were joined in one government, and paid the sum of two hundred talents. This was the eleventh satrapy.

From the Bactrian tribes as far as the Ægli, the tribute received was three hundred and sixty talents. This was the twelfth satrapy.

93. From Pactyica, Armenia, and the countries reaching thence to the Euxine, the sum drawn was four hundred talents. This was the thirteenth satrapy.

The Sagartians, Sarangians, Thamanæans, Utians, and Mycians, together with the inhabitants of the islands in the Erythræan sea, where the king sends those whom he banishes,

¹ Posideïum lay about 12 miles south of the embouchure of the Orontes.

² The district here spoken of is that between Gaza (Cadytis) and Jenysus (vide supra, ch. 5), which Cambyses traversed on his road to Egypt. Concerning the exemption of the Arabs from tribute, vide infra, ch. 97.

furnished altogether a tribute of six hundred talents. This was the fourteenth satrapy.

The Sacans and Caspians gave two hundred and fifty talents. This was the fifteenth satrapy.

The Parthians, Chorasmiens, Sogdians, and Arians, gave three hundred. This was the sixteenth satrapy.

94. The Paricanians and Ethiopians of Asia furnished a tribute of four hundred talents. This was the seventeenth satrapy.

The Matienians, Saspeires, and Alarodians were rated to pay two hundred talents. This was the eighteenth satrapy.

The Moschi, Tibareni, Macrones, Mosynœci, and Mares had to pay three hundred talents. This was the nineteenth satrapy.

The Indians, who are more numerous than any other nation with which we are acquainted, paid a tribute exceeding that of every other people, to wit, three hundred and sixty talents of gold-dust. This was the twentieth satrapy.

95. If the Babylonian money here spoken of be reduced to the Euboic scale, it will make nine thousand five hundred and forty such talents; and if the gold be reckoned at thirteen times the worth of silver,¹ the Indian gold-dust will come to four thousand six hundred and eighty talents. Add these two amounts together, and the whole revenue which came in to Darius year by year will be found to be in Euboic money fourteen thousand five hundred and sixty talents, not to mention parts of a talent.²

96. Such was the revenue which Darius derived from Asia and a small part of Libya. Later in his reign the sum was increased by the tribute of the islands, and of the nations of Europe as far as Thessaly. The great king stores away the tribute which he receives after this fashion—he melts it down, and, while it is in a liquid state, runs it into earthen vessels, which are afterwards removed, leaving the metal in a solid mass. When money is wanted, he coins as much of this bullion as the occasion requires.

97. Such then were the governments, and such the amounts

¹ In Greece the relative value of gold varied at different times. Herodotus says gold was to silver as 13 to 1, afterwards in Plato and Xenophon's time (and more than 100 years after the death of Alexander) it was 10 to 1, owing to the quantity of gold brought in through the Persian war. It long continued at 10 to 1 (Liv. xxxviii. 11) except when an accident altered the proportion of those metals.

² It is impossible to reconcile Herodotus's numbers, and equally impossible to say where the mistake lies.

of tribute at which they were assessed respectively. Persia alone has not been reckoned among the tributaries—and for this reason, because the country of the Persians is altogether exempt from tax. The following peoples paid no settled tribute, but brought gifts to the king: first, the Ethiopians bordering upon Egypt,¹ who were reduced by Cambyses when he made war on the long-lived Ethiopians, and who dwell about the sacred city of Nysa, and have festivals in honour of Bacchus. The grain on which they and their next neighbours feed is the same as that used by the Calantian Indians. Their dwelling-houses are under ground.² Every third year these two nations brought—and they still bring to my day—two chœnices³ of virgin gold, two hundred logs of ebony, five Ethiopian boys, and twenty elephant tusks. The Colchians, and the neighbouring tribes who dwell between them and the Caucasus—for so far the Persian rule reaches, while north of the Caucasus no one fears them any longer—undertook to furnish a gift, which in my day was still brought every fifth year, consisting of a hundred boys, and the same number of maidens. The Arabs brought every year a thousand talents of frankincense. Such were the gifts which the king received over and above the tribute-money.

98. The way in which the Indians get the plentiful supply of gold, which enables them to furnish year by year so vast an amount of gold-dust to the king, is the following:—Eastward of India lies a tract which is entirely sand. Indeed of all the inhabitants of Asia, concerning whom anything certain is known, the Indians dwell the nearest to the east, and the rising of the sun. Beyond them the whole country is desert on account of the sand.⁴ The tribes of Indians are numerous, and do not all speak the same language⁵—some are wandering tribes, others not. They who dwell in the marshes along the river live on raw fish, which they take in boats made of reeds, each formed out of a single joint. These Indians wear a dress

¹ These were the inhabitants of Lower Ethiopia and Nubia.

² This notion probably arose from their having mud huts, so common in central Africa.

³ [That is, about two quarts.—E. H. B.]

⁴ The India of Herodotus is the true *ancient* India, the region about the Upper Indus, best known to us at present under the name of the Punjab. Herodotus knows nothing of the great southern peninsula.

⁵ The Hindoo races are supposed to have been settled in India as early as 1200 B.C.; which is the date assigned to the Vedas, though these appear not to be all of one period. The aborigines are still found in Ceylon and in Southern India as well as in the hill-country in other parts; and their customs differ as much as their languages from those of the Hindoos.

of sedge, which they cut in the river and bruise; afterwards they weave it into mats, and wear it as we wear a breast-plate.

99. Eastward of these Indians are another tribe, called Padæans, who are wanderers, and live on raw flesh. This tribe is said to have the following customs:—If one of their number be ill, man or woman, they take the sick person, and if he be a man, the men of his acquaintance proceed to put him to death, because, they say, his flesh would be spoilt for them if he pined and wasted away with sickness. The man protests he is not ill in the least; but his friends will not accept his denial—in spite of all he can say, they kill him, and feast themselves on his body. So also if a woman be sick, the women, who are her friends, take her and do with her exactly the same as the men. If one of them reaches to old age, about which there is seldom any question, as commonly before that time they have had some disease or other, and so have been put to death—but if a man, notwithstanding, comes to be old, then they offer him in sacrifice to their gods, and afterwards eat his flesh.¹

100. There is another set of Indians whose customs are very different. They refuse to put any live animal to death,² they sow no corn, and have no dwelling-houses. Vegetables are their only food. There is a plant which grows wild in their country, bearing seed, about the size of millet-seed, in a calyx: their wont is to gather this seed and having boiled it, calyx and all, to use it for food. If one of them is attacked with sickness, he goes forth into the wilderness, and lies down to die; no one has the least concern either for the sick or for the dead.

101. All the tribes which I have mentioned live together like the brute beasts: they have also all the same tint of skin, which approaches that of the Ethiopians. Their country is a long way from Persia towards the south: nor had king Darius ever any authority over them.

102. Besides these, there are Indians of another tribe, who border on the city of Caspatyrus,³ and the country of Pactyica; these people dwell northward of all the rest of the Indians, and follow nearly the same mode of life as the Bactrians. They are more warlike than any of the other tribes, and from them the men are sent forth who go to procure the gold. For it is in

¹ Vide supra, ch. 38. The same custom is said to have prevailed among the Massagetæ (i. 216) and the Issedonians (iv. 26).

² The repugnance of true Brahmins to take away life is well known.

³ [Some say "Kabul," others "Kashmere"; but we have no means of ascertaining the site of Caspatyrus.—E. H. B.]

this part of India that the sandy desert lies. Here, in this desert, there live amid the sand great ants, in size somewhat less than dogs, but bigger than foxes. The Persian king has a number of them, which have been caught by the hunters in the land whereof we are speaking. Those ants make their dwellings under ground, and like the Greek ants, which they very much resemble in shape, throw up sand-heaps as they burrow. Now the sand which they throw up is full of gold.¹ The Indians, when they go into the desert to collect this sand, take three camels and harness them together, a female in the middle and a male on either side, in a leading-rein. The rider sits on the female, and they are particular to choose for the purpose one that has but just dropped her young; for their female camels can run as fast as horses, while they bear burthens very much better.

103. As the Greeks are well acquainted with the shape of the camel, I shall not trouble to describe it; but I shall mention what seems to have escaped their notice. The camel has in its hind legs four thigh-bones and four knee-joints.²

104. When the Indians therefore have thus equipped themselves they set off in quest of the gold, calculating the time so that they may be engaged in seizing it during the most sultry part of the day, when the ants hide themselves to escape the heat. The sun in those parts shines fiercest in the morning, not, as elsewhere, at noonday; the greatest heat is from the time when he has reached a certain height, until the hour at which the market closes. During this space he burns much more furiously than at midday in Greece, so that the men there are said at that time to drench themselves with water. At noon his heat is much the same in India as in other countries, after which, as the day declines, the warmth is only equal to that of the morning sun elsewhere. Towards evening the coolness increases, till about sunset it becomes very cold.³

105. When the Indians reach the place where the gold is,

¹ Modern research has not discovered anything very satisfactory either with respect to the animal intended, or the habits ascribed to it. Perhaps the most plausible conjecture is that which identifies it with the Pengolin, or Ant-eater, which burrows on the sandy plains of northern India.

² This is of course untrue, and it is difficult to understand how Herodotus could entertain such a notion. There is no *real* difference, as regards the anatomy of the leg, between the horse and the camel.

³ Herodotus is apparently narrating *what he had heard*, and it belongs to his simplicity not to mix up his own speculations with the relations which he had received from others.

they fill their bags with the sand, and ride away at their best speed: the ants, however, scenting them, as the Persians say, rush forth in pursuit. Now these animals are, they declare, so swift, that there is nothing in the world like them: if it were not, therefore, that the Indians get a start while the ants are mustering, not a single gold-gatherer could escape. During the flight the male camels, which are not so fleet as the females, grow tired, and begin to drag, first one, and then the other; but the females recollect the young which they have left behind, and never give way or flag.¹ Such, according to the Persians, is the manner in which the Indians get the greater part of their gold; some is dug out of the earth, but of this the supply is more scanty.²

106. It seems as if the extreme regions of the earth were blessed by nature with the most excellent productions, just in the same way that Greece enjoys a climate more excellently tempered than any other country. In India, which, as I observed lately, is the furthest region of the inhabited world towards the east, all the four-footed beasts and the birds are very much bigger than those found elsewhere, except only the horses, which are surpassed by the Median breed called the Nisæan. Gold too is produced there in vast abundance, some dug from the earth, some washed down by the rivers, some carried off in the mode which I have but now described. And further, there are trees which grow wild there, the fruit whereof is a wool exceeding in beauty and goodness that of sheep. The natives make their clothes of this tree-wool.³

107. Arabia is the last of inhabited lands towards the south, and it is the only country which produces frankincense, myrrh, cassia, cinnamon, and ladanum.⁴ The Arabians⁵ do not get any of these, except the myrrh,⁶ without trouble. The frankincense they procure by means of the gum styrax,⁷ which the

¹ Marco Polo relates that, when the Tatars make incursions into the country lying to the north of them, they adopt the same device.

² The whole of this region of Central Asia is in the highest degree auriferous.

³ Vide supra, ch. 47. "Tree-wool" is exactly the German name for cotton (*Baumwolle*).

⁴ Lédanon or ladanon, a resin or gum.

⁵ The Arabs supplied Egypt with various spices and gums which were required for embalming and other purposes. In Genesis xxxvii. 25, the Ishmaelites or Arabs were going to Egypt from "Gilead with their camels bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh."

⁶ Smyrna, the Greek name of *myrrh*, is the same as that of the city.

⁷ This is the "gum storax" of modern commerce.

Greeks obtain from the Phœnicians; this they burn, and thereby obtain the spice. For the trees which bear the frankincense are guarded by winged serpents, small in size, and of varied colours, whereof vast numbers hang about every tree. They are of the same kind as the serpents that invade Egypt;¹ and there is nothing but the smoke of the styrax which will drive them from the trees.

108. The Arabians say that the whole world would swarm with these serpents, if they were not kept in check in the way in which I know that vipers are. Of a truth Divine Providence does appear to be, as indeed one might expect beforehand, a wise contriver. For timid animals which are a prey to others are all made to produce young abundantly, that so the species may not be entirely eaten up and lost; while savage and noxious creatures are made very unfruitful. The hare, for instance, which is hunted alike by beasts, birds, and men, breeds so abundantly as even to superfetate, a thing which is true of no other animal. You find in a hare's belly, at one and the same time, some of the young all covered with fur, others quite naked, others again just fully formed in the womb, while the hare perhaps has lately conceived afresh. The lioness, on the other hand, which is one of the strongest and boldest of brutes, brings forth young but once in her lifetime,² and then a single cub;³ she cannot possibly conceive again, since she loses her womb at the same time that she drops her young. The reason of this is, that as soon as the cub begins to stir inside the dam, his claws, which are sharper than those of any other animal, scratch the womb; as the time goes on, and he grows bigger, he tears it ever more and more; so that at last, when the birth comes, there is not a morsel in the whole womb that is sound.

109. Now with respect to the vipers and the winged snakes of Arabia, if they increased as fast as their nature would allow, impossible were it for man to maintain himself upon the earth. Accordingly it is found that when the male and female come together, at the very moment of impregnation, the female seizes the male by the neck, and having once fastened, cannot be brought to leave go till she has bit the neck entirely through. And so the male perishes; but after a while he is revenged upon

¹ Vide supra, ii. 75. If serpents, they should be oviparous.

² The fabulous character of the whole of this account was known to Aristotle.

³ According to travellers, it is not uncommon for the lioness to have three or four cubs at a birth.

the female by means of the young, which, while still unborn, gnaw a passage through the womb, and then through the belly of their mother, and so make their entrance into the world. Contrariwise, other snakes, which are harmless, lay eggs, and hatch a vast number of young. Vipers are found in all parts of the world, but the winged serpents are nowhere seen except in Arabia, where they are all congregated together. This makes them appear so numerous.

110. Such, then, is the way in which the Arabians obtain their frankincense; their manner of collecting the cassia¹ is the following:—They cover all their body and their face with the hides of oxen and other skins, leaving only holes for the eyes, and thus protected go in search of the cassia, which grows in a lake of no great depth. All round the shores and in the lake itself there dwell a number of winged animals, much resembling bats, which screech horribly, and are very valiant. These creatures they must keep from their eyes all the while that they gather the cassia.

111. Still more wonderful is the mode in which they collect the cinnamon. Where the wood grows, and what country produces it, they cannot tell—only some, following probability, relate that it comes from the country in which Bacchus was brought up.² Great birds, they say, bring the sticks which we Greeks, taking the word from the Phœnicians, call cinnamon, and carry them up into the air to make their nests. These are fastened with a sort of mud to a sheer face of rock, where no foot of man is able to climb. So the Arabians, to get the cinnamon, use the following artifice. They cut all the oxen and asses and beasts of burthen that die in their land into large pieces, which they carry with them into those regions, and place near the nests: then they withdraw to a distance, and the old birds, swooping down, seize the pieces of meat and fly with them up to their nests; which, not being able to support the weight, break off and fall to the ground.³ Hereupon the Arabians return and collect the cinnamon, which is afterwards carried from Arabia into other countries.

¹ Cassia and cinnamon, according to Larcher (note ad loc.), are from the same tree, the only difference being that cinnamon is properly the branch with the bark on; cassia is the bark without the branch.

² Ethiopia probably.

³ The story evidently belongs to a whole class of Eastern tales, wherein an important part is played by great birds. Compare the *rocs* in the story of Sindbad the Sailor in the Arabian Nights, and the tale related by Marco Polo [Travels, p. 393 of the "Everyman's Library" edit.] of the mines of Golconda.

112. Ledanum, which the Arabs call *ladanum*, is procured in a yet stranger fashion. Found in a most inodorous place, it is the sweetest-scented of all substances. It is gathered from the beards of he-goats, where it is found sticking like gum, having come from the bushes on which they browse. It is used in many sorts of unguents, and is what the Arabs burn chiefly as incense.

113. Concerning the spices of Arabia let no more be said. The whole country is scented with them, and exhales an odour marvellously sweet. There are also in Arabia two kinds of sheep worthy of admiration, the like of which is nowhere else to be seen; the one kind has long tails, not less than three cubits in length, which, if they were allowed to trail on the ground, would be bruised and fall into sores. As it is, all the shepherds know enough of carpentering to make little trucks for their sheep's tails. The trucks are placed under the tails, each sheep having one to himself, and the tails are then tied down upon them. The other kind has a broad tail, which is a cubit across sometimes.

114. Where the south declines towards the setting sun lies the country called Ethiopia, the last inhabited land in that direction. There gold is obtained in great plenty,¹ huge elephants abound, with wild trees of all sorts, and ebony; and the men are taller, handsomer, and longer lived than anywhere else.

115. Now these are the furthest regions of the world in Asia and Libya. Of the extreme tracts of Europe towards the west I cannot speak with any certainty; for I do not allow that there is any river, to which the barbarians give the name of Eridanus, emptying itself into the northern sea, whence (as the tale goes) amber is procured;² nor do I know of any islands called the Cassiterides³ (Tin Islands), whence the tin comes which we use. For in the first place the name Eridanus is manifestly not a

¹ Vide supra, ch. 22.

² Here Herodotus is over-cautious, and rejects as fable what we can see to be truth. The amber district upon the northern sea is the coast of the Baltic about the Gulf of Dantzic, and the mouths of the Vistula and Niemen, which is still one of the best amber regions in the world. The very name, Eridanus, lingers there in the Rhodaune, the small stream which washes the west side of the town of Dantzic. The word Eridanus (= Rhodanus) seems to have been applied, by the early inhabitants of Europe, especially to great and strong-running rivers.

³ This name was applied to the Selinæ, or Scilly Isles; and the imperfect information respecting the site of the mines of tin led to the belief that they were there, instead of on the mainland (of Cornwall).

barbarian word at all, but a Greek name, invented by some poet or other; and secondly, though I have taken vast pains, I have never been able to get an assurance from an eye-witness that there is any sea on the further side of Europe. Nevertheless, tin and amber do certainly come to us from the ends of the earth.¹

116. The northern parts of Europe are very much richer in gold than any other region: but how it is procured I have no certain knowledge. The story runs, that the one-eyed Arimaspi purloin it from the griffins; but here too I am incredulous, and cannot persuade myself that there is a race of men born with one eye, who in all else resemble the rest of mankind. Nevertheless it seems to be true that the extreme regions of the earth, which surround and shut up within themselves all other countries, produce the things which are the rarest, and which men reckon the most beautiful.

117. There is a plain in Asia which is shut in on all sides by a mountain-range, and in this mountain-range are five openings. The plain lies on the confines of the Chorasians, Hyrcanians, Parthians, Sarangians, and Thamanæans, and belonged formerly to the first-mentioned of those peoples. Ever since the Persians, however, obtained the mastery of Asia, it has been the property of the Great King. A mighty river, called the Aces,² flows from the hills inclosing the plain; and this stream, formerly splitting into five channels, ran through the five openings in the hills, and watered the lands of the five nations which dwell around. The Persian came, however, and conquered the region, and then it went ill with the people of these lands. The Great King blocked up all the passages between the hills with dykes and flood-gates, and so prevented the water from flowing out. Then the plain within the hills became a sea, for the river kept rising, and the water could find no outlet. From that time the five nations which were wont formerly to have the use of the stream, losing their accustomed supply of water, have been in great distress. In winter, indeed, they have

¹ [For a brief account of the *amber* and *tin* trades in antiquity, see Tozer, *History of Ancient Geography*, pp. 32 sqq., and for a note on amber, W. Ridgeway's art. in *Encyclopædia Biblica*, cols. 134-136.—E. H. B.]

² The plain and the five openings are probably a fable; but the origin of the tale may be found in the distribution by the Persian Government of the waters (most likely) of the Heri-rud, which is capable of being led through the hills into the low country north of the range, or of being prolonged westward along the range, or finally of being turned southward into the desert.

rain from heaven like the rest of the world, but in summer, after sowing their millet and their sesame, they always stood in need of water from the river. When, therefore, they suffer from this want, hastening to Persia, men and women alike, they take their station at the gate of the king's palace, and wail aloud. Then the king orders the flood-gates to be opened towards the country whose need is greatest, and lets the soil drink until it has had enough; after which the gates on this side are shut, and others are unclosed for the nation which, of the remainder, needs it most. It has been told me that the king never gives the order to open the gates till the suppliants have paid him a large sum of money over and above the tribute.

118. Of the seven Persians who rose up against the Magus, one, Intaphernes, lost his life very shortly after the outbreak, for an act of insolence. He wished to enter the palace and transact a certain business with the king. Now the law was that all those who had taken part in the rising against the Magus might enter unannounced into the king's presence, unless he happened to be in private with his wife.¹ So Intaphernes would not have any one announce him, but, as he belonged to the seven, claimed it as his right to go in. The doorkeeper, however, and the chief usher forbade his entrance, since the king, they said, was with his wife. But Intaphernes thought they told lies; so, drawing his scymitar, he cut off their noses and their ears,² and, hanging them on the bridle of his horse, put the bridle round their necks, and so let them go.

119. Then these two men went and showed themselves to the king, and told him how it had come to pass that they were thus treated. Darius trembled lest it was by the common consent of the six that the deed had been done; he therefore sent for them all in turn, and sounded them to know if they approved the conduct of Intaphernes. When he found by their answers that there had been no concert between him and them, he laid hands on Intaphernes, his children, and all his near kindred; strongly suspecting that he and his friends were about to raise a revolt. When all had been seized and put in chains, as malefactors condemned to death, the wife of Intaphernes came and stood continually at the palace-gates, weeping and wailing sore. So Darius after a while, seeing that she never ceased to

¹ Supra, ch. 84.

² This mode of punishment has always been common in the East. Its infliction by the revolted Sepoys on our own countrymen and countrywomen during the Mutiny in 1857 will occur to all readers.

stand and weep, was touched with pity for her, and bade a messenger go to her and say, "Lady, king Darius gives thee as a boon the life of one of thy kinsmen—choose which thou wilt of the prisoners." Then she pondered awhile before she answered, "If the king grants me the life of one alone, I make choice of my brother." Darius, when he heard the reply, was astonished, and sent again, saying, "Lady, the king bids thee tell him why it is that thou passest by thy husband and thy children, and preferrest to have the life of thy brother spared. He is not so near to thee as thy children, nor so dear as thy husband." She answered, "O king, if the gods will, I may have another husband and other children when these are gone. But as my father and my mother are no more, it is impossible that I should have another brother. This was my thought when I asked to have my brother spared." Then it seemed to Darius that the lady spoke well, and he gave her, besides the life that she had asked, the life also of her eldest son, because he was greatly pleased with her. But he slew all the rest. Thus one of the seven died, in the way I have described, very shortly after the insurrection.

120. About the time of Cambyses' last sickness, the following events happened. There was a certain Orcetes, a Persian, whom Cyrus had made governor of Sardis. This man conceived a most unholy wish. He had never suffered wrong or had an ill word from Polycrates the Samian—nay, he had not so much as seen him in all his life; yet, notwithstanding, he conceived the wish to seize him and put him to death. This wish, according to the account which the most part give, arose from what happened one day as he was sitting with another Persian in the gate of the king's palace. The man's name was Mitrobates, and he was ruler of the satrapy of Dascyleium.¹ He and Orcetes had been talking together, and from talking they fell to quarrelling and comparing their merits; whereupon Mitrobates said to Orcetes reproachfully, "Art thou worthy to be called a man, when, near as Samos lies to thy government, and easy as it is to conquer, thou hast omitted to bring it under the dominion of the king? Easy to conquer, said I? Why, a mere common citizen, with the help of fifteen men-at-arms, mastered the island, and is still king of it." Orcetes, they say, took this reproach

¹ Dascyleium was the capital city of the great northern satrapy, which at this time (according to Herodotus, *supra*, ch. 90) included the whole of Phrygia.

greatly to heart; but, instead of seeking to revenge himself on the man by whom it was uttered, he conceived the desire of destroying Polycrates, since it was on Polycrates' account that the reproach had fallen on him.

121. Another less common version of the story is that Oroetes sent a herald to Samos to make a request, the nature of which is not stated; Polycrates was at the time reclining in the apartment of the males, and Anacreon the Teian was with him; when therefore the herald came forward to converse, Polycrates, either out of studied contempt for the power of Oroetes, or it may be merely by chance, was lying with his face turned away towards the wall; and so he lay all the time that the herald spake, and when he ended, did not even vouchsafe him a word.

122. Such are the two reasons alleged for the death of Polycrates; it is open to all to believe which they please. What is certain is, that Oroetes, while residing at Magnesia on the Mæander, sent a Lydian, by name Myrsus, the son of Gyges,¹ with a message to Polycrates at Samos, well knowing what that monarch designed. For Polycrates entertained a design which no other Greek, so far as we know, ever formed before him, unless it were Minos the Cnossian, and those (if there were any such) who had the mastery of the Egæan at an earlier time—Polycrates, I say, was the first of mere human birth who conceived the design of gaining the empire of the sea, and aspired to rule over Ionia and the islands. Knowing then that Polycrates was thus minded, Oroetes sent his message, which ran as follows:—

“Oroetes to Polycrates thus sayeth: I hear thou raisest thy thoughts high, but thy means are not equal to thy ambition. Listen then to my words, and learn how thou mayest at once serve thyself and preserve me. King Cambyses is bent on my destruction—of this I have warning from a sure hand. Come thou, therefore, and fetch me away, me and all my wealth—share my wealth with me, and then, so far as money can aid, thou mayest make thyself master of the whole of Greece. But if thou doubttest of my wealth, send the trustiest of thy followers, and I will show my treasures to him.”

123. Polycrates, when he heard this message, was full of joy, and straightway approved the terms; but, as money was what he chiefly desired, before stirring in the business he sent his

¹ Vide infra, v. 121.

secretary, Mæandrius, son of Mæandrius,¹ a Samian, to look into the matter. This was the man who, not very long afterwards, made an offering at the temple of Juno of all the furniture which had adorned the male apartments in the palace of Polycrates, an offering well worth seeing. Orætes learning that one was coming to view his treasures, contrived as follows:—he filled eight great chests almost brimful of stones, and then covering over the stones with gold, corded the chests, and so held them in readiness.² When Mæandrius arrived, he was shown this as Orætes' treasure, and having seen it returned to Samos.

124. On hearing his account, Polycrates, notwithstanding many warnings given him by the soothsayers, and much dissuasion of his friends, made ready to go in person. Even the dream which visited his daughter failed to check him. She had dreamed that she saw her father hanging high in air, washed by Jove, and anointed by the sun. Having therefore thus dreamed, she used every effort to prevent her father from going; even as he went on board his penteconter crying after him with words of evil omen. Then Polycrates threatened her that, if he returned in safety, he would keep her unmarried many years. She answered, "Oh! that he might perform his threat; far better for her to remain long unmarried than to be bereft of her father!"

125. Polycrates, however, making light of all the counsel offered him, set sail and went to Orætes. Many friends accompanied him; among the rest, Democêdes, the son of Calliphon, a native of Crotona, who was a physician, and the best skilled in his art of all men then living. Polycrates, on his arrival at Magnesia, perished miserably, in a way unworthy of his rank and of his lofty schemes. For, if we except the Syracusans,³ there has never been one of the Greek tyrants who was to be compared with Polycrates for magnificence. Orætes, however, slew him in a mode which is not fit to be described, and then hung his dead body upon a cross. His Samian followers Orætes let go free, bidding them thank him that they were allowed their liberty; the rest, who were in part slaves, in part free foreigners, he alike treated as his slaves by conquest. Then was the dream

¹ This is the only instance in Herodotus of a Greek bearing the name of his father.

² Compare the similar artifice by which Hannibal [when in Crete] deceived the Gortynians. [Cf. Nepos, *Life of Hannibal*, chap. ix.—E. H. B.]

³ Gelo, Hiero, and Thrasybulus, three brothers, who successively ruled over Syracuse from B.C. 485 to B.C. 466.

of the daughter of Polycrates fulfilled; for Polycrates, as he hung upon the cross, and rain fell on him, was washed by Jupiter; and he was anointed by the sun, when his own moisture overspread his body. And so the vast good fortune of Polycrates came at last to the end which Amasis the Egyptian king had prophesied in days gone by.

126. It was not long before retribution for the murder of Polycrates overtook Orætes. After the death of Cambyzes, and during all the time that the Magus sat upon the throne, Orætes remained in Sardis, and brought no help to the Persians, whom the Medes had robbed of the sovereignty. On the contrary, amid the troubles of this season, he slew Mitrobates, the satrap of Dascyleium, who had cast the reproach upon him in the matter of Polycrates; and he slew also Mitrobates's son, Cranaspes,—both men of high repute among the Persians. He was likewise guilty of many other acts of insolence; among the rest, of the following:—There was a courier sent to him by Darius whose message was not to his mind—Orætes had him waylaid and murdered on his road back to the king; the man and his horse both disappeared, and no traces were left of either.

127. Darius therefore was no sooner settled upon the throne than he longed to take vengeance upon Orætes for all his misdoings, and especially for the murder of Mitrobates and his son. To send an armed force openly against him, however, he did not think advisable, as the whole kingdom was still unsettled, and he too was but lately come to the throne, while Orætes, as he understood, had a great power. In truth a thousand Persians attended on him as a body-guard, and he held the satrapies of Phrygia, Lydia, and Ionia. Darius therefore proceeded by artifice. He called together a meeting of all the chief of the Persians, and thus addressed them:—"Who among you, O Persians, will undertake to accomplish me a matter by skill without force or tumult? Force is misplaced where the work wants skilful management. Who, then, will undertake to bring me Orætes alive, or else to kill him? He never did the Persians any good in his life, and he has wrought us abundant injury. Two of our number, Mitrobates and his son, he has slain; and when messengers go to recall him, even though they have their mandate from me, with an insolence which is not to be endured, he puts them to death.¹ We must kill this man, therefore, before he does the Persians any greater hurt."

¹ Turkish pashas and Persian governors have often had recourse to similar stratagems.

128. Thus spoke Darius; and straightway thirty of those present came forward and offered themselves for the work. As they strove together, Darius interfered, and bade them have recourse to the lot. Accordingly lots were cast, and the task fell to Bagæus, son of Artontes. Then Bagæus caused many letters to be written on divers matters, and sealed them all with the king's signet; after which he took the letters with him, and departed for Sardis. On his arrival he was shown into the presence of Orœtes, when he uncovered the letters one by one, and giving them to the king's secretary—every satrap has with him a king's secretary—commanded him to read their contents. Herein his design was to try the fidelity of the body-guard, and to see if they would be likely to fall away from Orœtes. When therefore he saw that they showed the letters all due respect, and even more highly revered their contents, he gave the secretary a paper in which was written, "Persians, king Darius forbids you to guard Orœtes." The soldiers at these words laid aside their spears. So Bagæus, finding that they obeyed this mandate, took courage, and gave into the secretary's hands the last letter, wherein it was written, "King Darius commands the Persians who are in Sardis to kill Orœtes." Then the guards drew their swords and slew him upon the spot. Thus did retribution for the murder of Polycrates the Samian overtake Orœtes the Persian.

129. Soon after the treasures of Orœtes had been conveyed to Sardis¹ it happened that king Darius, as he leaped from his horse during the chase, sprained his foot. The sprain was one of no common severity, for the ankle-bone was forced quite out of the socket. Now Darius already had at his court certain Egyptians whom he reckoned the best-skilled physicians in all the world;² to their aid, therefore, he had recourse; but they twisted the foot so clumsily, and used such violence, that they only made the mischief greater. For seven days and seven nights the king lay without sleep, so grievous was the pain he suffered. On the eighth day of his indisposition, one who had heard before leaving Sardis of the skill of Democêdes the Crotoniat, told Darius, who commanded that he should be brought with all speed into his presence. When, therefore, they had found him among the slaves of Orœtes, quite uncared for by any

¹ In the East the disgrace of a governor, or other great man, has always involved the forfeiture of his property to the crown.

² On the celebrity of the Egyptians as physicians, see Book ii. ch. 84.

one, they brought him just as he was, clanking his fetters, and all clothed in rags, before the king.

130. As soon as he was entered into the presence, Darius asked him if he knew medicine—to which he answered “No,” for he feared that if he made himself known he would lose all chance of ever again beholding Greece. Darius, however, perceiving that he dealt deceitfully, and really understood the art, bade those who had brought him to the presence go fetch the scourges and the pricking-irons.¹ Upon this Democêdes made confession, but at the same time said, that he had no thorough knowledge of medicine—he had but lived some time with a physician, and in this way had gained a slight smattering of the art. However, Darius put himself under his care, and Democêdes, by using the remedies customary among the Greeks, and exchanging the violent treatment of the Egyptians for milder means, first enabled him to get some sleep, and then in a very little time restored him altogether, after he had quite lost the hope of ever having the use of his foot. Hereupon the king presented Democêdes with two sets of fetters wrought in gold; so Democêdes asked if he meant to double his sufferings because he had brought him back to health? Darius was pleased at the speech, and bade the eunuchs take Democêdes to see his wives, which they did accordingly, telling them all that this was the man who had saved the king’s life. Then each of the wives dipped with a saucer into a chest of gold, and gave so bountifully to Democêdes, that a slave named Sciton, who followed him, and picked up the staters² which fell from the saucers, gathered together a great heap of gold.

131. This Democêdes left his country and became attached to Polycrates in the following way:—His father, who dwelt at Crotona, was a man of a savage temper, and treated him cruelly. When, therefore, he could no longer bear such constant ill-usage, Democêdes left his home, and sailed away to Egina. There he set up in business, and succeeded the first year in surpassing all the best-skilled physicians of the place, notwithstanding that he was without instruments, and had with him none of the appliances needful for the practice of his art. In the second

¹ In ancient, as in modern times, putting out the eyes has been a Persian punishment. [See the story of Zedekiah, *Jeremiah*, xxxix. 8.—E. H. B.]

² By staters we must here understand Darics, the earliest gold coin of Persia. Herodotus in another place calls them Daric staters (vii. 28). These were of very nearly the same value as the staters principally current Greece [*i.e.* rather over a guinea.—E. H. B.].

year the state of Egina hired his services at the price of a talent; in the third the Athenians engaged him at a hundred minæ; and in the fourth Polycrates at two talents.¹ So he went to Samos, and there took up his abode. It was in no small measure from his success that the Crotoniats came to be reckoned such good physicians; for about this period the physicians of Crotona had the name of being the best, and those of Cyrêné the second best, in all Greece. The Argives, about the same time, were thought to be the first musicians in Greece.

132. After Democêdes had cured Darius at Susa, he dwelt there in a large house, and feasted daily at the king's table, nor did he lack anything that his heart desired, excepting liberty to return to his country. By interceding for them with Darius, he saved the lives of the Egyptian physicians who had had the care of the king before he came, when they were about to be impaled because they had been surpassed by a Greek; and further, he succeeded in rescuing an Elean soothsayer,² who had followed the fortunes of Polycrates, and was lying in utter neglect among his slaves. In short there was no one who stood so high as Democêdes in the favour of the king.

133. Moreover, within a little while it happened that Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus, who was married to Darius, had a boil form upon her breast, which, after it burst, began to spread and increase. Now so long as the sore was of no great size, she hid it through shame and made no mention of it to any one; but when it became worse, she sent at last for Democêdes, and showed it to him. Democêdes said that he would make her well, but she must first promise him with an oath that if he cured her she would grant him whatever request he might prefer; assuring her at the same time that it should be nothing which she could blush to hear.

134. On these terms Democêdes applied his art, and soon cured the abscess; and Atossa, when she had heard his request, spake thus one night to Darius:—

“It seemeth to me strange, my lord, that, with the mighty power which is thine, thou sittest idle, and neither makest any

¹ Herodotus, where he mentions no standard, must be regarded as intending the Attic, which was in general use throughout Greece in his own day. The salary of Democêdes will therefore be:—1st year, 60 minæ, or £243 15s.; 2nd year, 100 minæ, or £406 5s.; 3rd year, 120 minæ, or £487 10s.

² Elis about this time appears to have furnished soothsayers to all Greece.

conquest, nor advancest the power of the Persians. Methinks that one who is so young, and so richly endowed with wealth, should perform some noble achievement to prove to the Persians that it is a man who governs them. Another reason, too, should urge thee to attempt some enterprise. Not only does it befit thee to show the Persians that a man rules them, but for thy own peace thou shouldest waste their strength in wars lest idleness breed revolt against thy authority. Now, too, whilst thou art still young, thou mayest well accomplish some exploit; for as the body grows in strength the mind too ripens, and as the body ages, the mind's powers decay, till at last it becomes dulled to everything."

So spake Atossa, as Democêdes had instructed her. Darius answered:—"Dear lady, thou hast uttered the very thoughts that occupy my brain. I am minded to construct a bridge which shall join our continent with the other, and so carry war into Scythia. Yet a brief space and all will be accomplished as thou desirest."

But Atossa rejoined:—"Look now, this war with Scythia were best reserved awhile—for the Scythians may be conquered at any time. Prithee, lead me thy host first into Greece. I long to be served by some of those Lacedæmonian maids of whom I have heard so much. I want also Argive, and Athenian, and Corinthian women. There is now at the court a man who can tell thee better than any one else in the whole world whatever thou wouldst know concerning Greece, and who might serve thee right well as guide; I mean him who performed the cure on thy foot."

"Dear lady," Darius answered, "since it is thy wish that we try first the valour of the Greeks, it were best, methinks, before marching against them, to send some Persians to spy out the land; they may go in company with the man thou mentionest, and when they have seen and learnt all, they can bring us back a full report. Then, having a more perfect knowledge of them, I will begin the war."

135. Darius, having so spoke, put no long distance between the word and the deed, but as soon as day broke he summoned to his presence fifteen Persians of note, and bade them take Democêdes for their guide, and explore the sea-coasts of Greece. Above all, they were to be sure to bring Democêdes back with them, and not suffer him to run away and escape. After he had given these orders, Darius sent for Democêdes, and besought

him to serve as guide to the Persians, and when he had shown them the whole of Greece to come back to Persia. He should take, he said, all the valuables he possessed as presents to his father and his brothers, and he should receive on his return a far more abundant store. Moreover, the king added, he would give him, as his contribution towards the presents, a merchant-ship laden with all manner of precious things, which should accompany him on his voyage. Now I do not believe that Darius, when he made these promises, had any guile in his heart: Democêdes, however, who suspected that the king spoke to try him, took care not to snatch at the offers with any haste; but said, "he would leave his own goods behind to enjoy upon his return—the merchant-ship which the king proposed to grant him to carry gifts to his brothers, that he would accept at the king's hands." So when Darius had laid his orders upon Democêdes, he sent him and the Persians away to the coast.

136. The men went down to Phœnicia, to Sidon, the Phœnician town, where straightway they fitted out two triremes and a trading-vessel,¹ which they loaded with all manner of precious merchandise; and, everything being now ready, they set sail for Greece. When they had made the land, they kept along the shore and examined it, taking notes of all that they saw; and in this way they explored the greater portion of the country, and all the most famous regions, until at last they reached Tarentum in Italy. There Aristophilides, king of the Tarentines, out of kindness to Democêdes, took the rudders off the Median ships, and detained their crews as spies. Meanwhile Democêdes escaped to Crotona, his native city,² whereupon Aristophilides released the Persians from prison, and gave their rudders back to them.

137. The Persians now quitted Tarentum, and sailed to Crotona in pursuit of Democêdes; they found him in the market-place, where they straightway laid violent hands on him. Some of the Crotoniats, who greatly feared the power of the Persians, were willing to give him up; but others resisted, held Democêdes fast, and even struck the Persians with their walking-sticks. They, on their part, kept crying out, "Men of Crotona, beware what you do. It is the king's runaway slave

¹ Literally, "a round-built vessel." It may be remarked that the Greek writers use γαῦλος specially, if not solely, for a Phœnician merchant-ship.

² Crotona was distant about 150 miles along shore from Tarentum (Taranto).

that you are rescuing. Think you Darius will tamely submit to such an insult? Think you, that if you carry off the man from us, it will hereafter go well with you? Will you not rather be the first persons on whom we shall make war? Will not your city be the first we shall seek to lead away captive?" Thus they spake, but the Crotoniats did not heed them; they rescued Democêdes, and seized also the trading-ship which the Persians had brought with them from Phœnicia. Thus robbed, and bereft of their guide, the Persians gave up all hope of exploring the rest of Greece, and set sail for Asia. As they were departing, Democêdes sent to them and begged they would inform Darius that the daughter of Milo was affianced to him as his bride. For the name of Milo the wrestler was in high repute with the king.¹ My belief is, that Democêdes hastened his marriage by the payment of a large sum of money for the purpose of showing Darius that he was a man of mark in his own country.

138. The Persians weighed anchor and left Crotona, but, being wrecked on the coast of Iapygia,² were made slaves by the inhabitants. From this condition they were rescued by Gillus, a banished Tarentine, who ransomed them at his own cost, and took them back to Darius. Darius offered to repay this service by granting Gillus whatever boon he chose to ask; whereupon Gillus told the king of his misfortune, and begged to be restored to his country. Fearing, however, that he might bring trouble on Greece if a vast armament were sent to Italy on his account, he added that it would content him if the Cnidians undertook to obtain his recall. Now the Cnidians were close friends of the Tarentines, which made him think there was no likelier means of procuring his return. Darius promised and performed his part; for he sent a messenger to Cnidus, and commanded the Cnidians to restore Gillus. The Cnidians did as he wished, but found themselves unable to persuade the Tarentines, and were too weak to attempt force. Such then was the course which this matter took. These were the first Persians who ever came from Asia to Greece;³ and they were sent to spy out the land for the reason which I have before mentioned.

¹ Milo is said to have carried off the prize for wrestling, six times at the Olympic, and seven times at the Pythian, games. Grote remarks with justice that "gigantic muscular force" would be appreciated in Persia much more than intellectual ability.

² The Iapygian promontory (*Capo di Leuca*) was always difficult to double.

³ Compare the conclusion of ch. 56. In the mind of Herodotus this

139. After this, king Darius besieged and took Samos, which was the first city, Greek or Barbarian, that he conquered. The cause of his making war upon Samos was the following:—At the time when Cambyses, son of Cyrus, marched against Egypt, vast numbers of Greeks flocked thither; some, as might have been looked for, to push their trade; others, to serve in his army; others again, merely to see the land: among these last was Syloson, son of *Æaces*, and brother of *Polycrates*, at that time an exile from Samos.¹ This Syloson, during his stay in Egypt, met with a singular piece of good fortune. He happened one day to put on a scarlet cloak, and thus attired to go into the market-place at Memphis, when Darius, who was one of Cambyses' body-guard, and not at that time a man of any account,² saw him, and taking a strong liking to the dress, went up and offered to purchase it. Syloson perceived how anxious he was, and by a lucky inspiration answered: "There is no price at which I would sell my cloak; but I will give it thee for nothing, if it must needs be thine." Darius thanked him, and accepted the garment.

140. Poor Syloson felt at the time that he had fooled away his cloak in a very simple manner; but afterwards, when in the course of years Cambyses died, and the seven Persians rose in revolt against the Magus, and Darius was the man chosen out of the seven to have the kingdom, Syloson learnt that the person to whom the crown had come was the very man who had coveted his cloak in Egypt, and to whom he had freely given it. So he made his way to Susa, and seating himself at the portal of the royal palace, gave out that he was a benefactor of the king.³ Then the doorkeeper went and told Darius. Amazed at what he heard, the king said thus within himself:—"What Greek can have been my benefactor, or to which of them do I owe anything, so lately as I have got the kingdom? Scarcely a man of them all has been here, not more than one or two certainly, since I came to the throne. Nor do I remember that I am in the debt of any Greek. However, bring him in, and let me hear what he means by his boast." So the doorkeeper ushered voyage is of the greatest importance. It is the first step towards the invasion of Greece, and so a chief link in the chain of his History. Whether Darius attached much importance to it is a different matter.

¹ Vide *supra*, ch. 39.

² This could not be true, yet it is a necessary feature in the story.

³ The king's benefactors were a body of persons whose names were formally enregistered in the royal archives (*vide infra*, viii. 85). Syloson makes a claim to be put on this list.

Syloson into the presence, and the interpreters asked him who he was, and what he had done that he should call himself a benefactor of the king. Then Syloson told the whole story of the cloak, and said that it was he who had made Darius the present. Hereupon Darius exclaimed, "Oh! thou most generous of men, art thou indeed he who, when I had no power at all, gavest me something, albeit little? Truly the favour is as great as a very grand present would be nowadays. I will therefore give thee in return gold and silver without stint, that thou mayest never repent of having rendered a service to Darius, son of Hystaspes." "Give me not, O king," replied Syloson, "either silver or gold, but recover me Samos, my native land, and let that be thy gift to me. It belongs now to a slave of ours, who, when Oroetes put my brother Polycrates to death, became its master. Give me Samos, I beg; but give it unharmed, with no bloodshed—no leading into captivity."

141. When he heard this, Darius sent off an army, under Otanes, one of the seven, with orders to accomplish all that Syloson had desired. And Otanes went down to the coast and made ready to cross over.

142. The government of Samos was held at this time by Mæandrius, son of Mæandrius,¹ whom Polycrates had appointed as his deputy. This person conceived the wish to act like the justest of men, but it was not allowed him to do so. On receiving tidings of the death of Polycrates, he forthwith raised an altar to Jove the Protector of Freedom, and assigned it the piece of ground which may still be seen in the suburb. This done, he assembled all the citizens, and spoke to them as follows:—

"Ye know, friends, that the sceptre of Polycrates, and all his power, has passed into my hands, and if I choose I may rule over you. But what I condemn in another I will, if I may, avoid myself. I never approved the ambition of Polycrates to lord it over men as good as himself, nor looked with favour on any of those who have done the like. Now therefore, since he has fulfilled his destiny, I lay down my office, and proclaim equal rights. All that I claim in return is six talents from the treasures of Polycrates, and the priesthood of Jove the Protector of Freedom, for myself and my descendants for ever. Allow me this, as the man by whom his temple has been built, and by whom ye yourselves are now restored to liberty." As soon as Mæandrius had ended, one of the Samians rose up and

¹ Vide *supra*, ch. 123.

said, "As if thou wert fit to rule us, base-born¹ and rascal as thou art! Think rather of accounting for the monies which thou hast fingered."

143. The man who thus spoke was a certain Telesarchus, one of the leading citizens. Mæandrius, therefore, feeling sure that if he laid down the sovereign power some one else would become tyrant in his room, gave up the thought of relinquishing it. Withdrawing to the citadel, he sent for the chief men one by one, under pretence of showing them his accounts, and as fast as they came arrested them and put them in irons. So these men were bound; and Mæandrius within a short time fell sick: whereupon Lycarêtus,² one of his brothers, thinking that he was going to die, and wishing to make his own accession to the throne the easier, slew all the prisoners. It seemed that the Samians did not choose to be a free people.

144. When the Persians whose business it was to restore Syloson reached Samos, not a man was found to lift up his hand against them. Mæandrius and his partisans expressed themselves willing to quit the island upon certain terms, and these terms were agreed to by Otanes. After the treaty was made, the most distinguished of the Persians had their thrones³ brought, and seated themselves over against the citadel.

145. Now the king Mæandrius had a lightheaded brother—Charilaüs by name—whom for some offence or other he had shut up in prison: this man heard what was going on, and peering through his bars, saw the Persians sitting peacefully upon their seats, whereupon he exclaimed aloud, and said he must speak with Mæandrius. When this was reported to him, Mæandrius gave orders that Charilaüs should be released from prison and brought into his presence. No sooner did he arrive than he began reviling and abusing his brother, and strove to persuade him to attack the Persians. "Thou meanest-spirited of men," he said, "thou canst keep me, thy brother, chained in a dungeon, notwithstanding that I have done nothing worthy of bonds; but when the Persians come and drive thee forth a houseless wanderer from thy native land, thou lookest on, and

¹ Mæandrius had been the secretary (γραμματιστής) of Polycrates (supra, ch. 123), which would indicate a humble origin.

² For the ultimate fate of Lycarêtus, see below, Book v. ch. 27.

³ For a representation of the Persian throne, see note on Book vii. ch. 15. Darius is mentioned as sitting upon a throne at the siege of Babylon (infra, ch. 155), and Xerxes at Thermopylæ (vii. 211, ad fin.), and Salamis (viii. 90). So Sennacherib is represented in the Assyrian sculptures.

hast not the heart to seek revenge, though they might so easily be subdued. If thou, however, art afraid, lend me thy soldiers, and I will make them pay dearly for their coming here. I engage too to send thee first safe out of the island."

146. So spake Charilaüs, and Mæandrius gave consent; not (I believe) that he was so void of sense as to imagine that his own forces could overcome those of the king, but because he was jealous of Syloson, and did not wish him to get so quietly an unharmed city. He desired therefore to rouse the anger of the Persians against Samos, that so he might deliver it up to Syloson with its power at the lowest possible ebb; for he knew well that if the Persians met with a disaster they would be furious against the Samians, while he himself felt secure of a retreat at any time that he liked, since he had a secret passage under ground¹ leading from the citadel to the sea. Mæandrius accordingly took ship and sailed away from Samos; and Charilaüs, having armed all the mercenaries, threw open the gates, and fell upon the Persians, who looked for nothing less, since they supposed that the whole matter had been arranged by treaty. At the first onslaught therefore all the Persians of most note, men who were in the habit of using litters, were slain by the mercenaries; the rest of the army, however, came to the rescue, defeated the mercenaries, and drove them back into the citadel.

147. Then Otanes, the general, when he saw the great calamity which had befallen the Persians, made up his mind to forget the orders which Darius had given him, "not to kill or enslave a single Samian, but to deliver up the island unharmed to Syloson," and gave the word to his army that they should slay the Samians, both men and boys, wherever they could find them. Upon this some of his troops laid siege to the citadel, while others began the massacre, killing all they met, some outside, some inside the temples.

148. Mæandrius fled from Samos to Lacedæmon, and conveyed thither all the riches which he had brought away from the island, after which he acted as follows. Having placed upon his board all the gold and silver vessels that he had, and bade his servants employ themselves in cleaning them, he himself went and entered into conversation with Cleomenes, son of Anaxandridas, king of Sparta, and as they talked brought him along to

¹ That the art of tunnelling was known at Samos is evident from what is said above (ch. 60). and from the remains which have been found in the island.

his house. There Cleomenes, seeing the plate, was filled with wonder and astonishment; whereon the other begged that he would carry home with him any of the vessels that he liked. Mæandrius said this two or three times; but Cleomenes here displayed surpassing honesty.¹ He refused the gift, and thinking that if Mæandrius made the same offers to others he would get the aid he sought, the Spartan king went straight to the ephors and told them "it would be best for Sparta that the Samian stranger should be sent away from the Peloponnese; for otherwise he might perchance persuade himself or some other Spartan to be base." The ephors took his advice, and let Mæandrius know by a herald that he must leave the city.

149. Meanwhile the Persians netted ² Samos, and delivered it up to Syloson, stripped of all its men. After some time, however, this same general Otanes was induced to repeople it by a dream which he had, and a loathsome disease that seized on him.

150. After the armament of Otanes had set sail for Samos, the Babylonians revolted,³ having made every preparation for defence. During all the time that the Magus was king, and while the seven were conspiring, they had profited by the troubles, and had made themselves ready against a siege. And it happened somehow or other that no one perceived what they were doing. At last when the time came for rebelling openly, they did as follows:—having first set apart their mothers, each man chose besides out of his whole household one woman, whomsoever he pleased; these alone were allowed to live, while all the rest were brought to one place and strangled. The women chosen were kept to make bread for the men;⁴ while the others were strangled that they might not consume the stores.

151. When tidings reached Darius of what had happened, he drew together all his power, and began the war by marching straight upon Babylon, and laying siege to the place. The

¹ It was rarely that the Spartan kings, or indeed their other leaders, could resist a bribe.

² For the description of this process see below, Book vi. ch. 31. Samos does not appear to have suffered very greatly by these transactions, since in the Ionian revolt, not twenty years afterwards, she was able to furnish sixty ships (vi. 8). The severities exercised by the Persians are probably exaggerated.

³ It has been already mentioned that Babylon revolted *twice* from Darius, once in the first, and a second time in the fourth year of his reign. It cannot be determined which of these two revolts Herodotus intended to describe.

⁴ The "bread-maker" had not merely to mix and bake the bread, but to grind the flour. (Cf. Exodus xi. 5; Matt. xxiv. 41.)

Babylonians, however, cared not a whit for his siege.¹ Mounting upon the battlements that crowned their walls, they insulted and jeered at Darius and his mighty host. One even shouted to them and said, "Why sit ye there, Persians? why do ye not go back to your homes? Till mules foal ye will not take our city." This was said by a Babylonian who thought that a mule would never foal.

152. Now when a year and seven months had passed, Darius and his army were quite wearied out, finding that they could not anyhow take the city. All stratagems and all arts had been used, and yet the king could not prevail—not even when he tried the means by which Cyrus made himself master of the place. The Babylonians were ever upon the watch, and he found no way of conquering them.

153. At last, in the twentieth month, a marvellous thing happened to Zopyrus, son of the Megabyzus who was among the seven men that overthrew the Magus. One of his sumpter-mules gave birth to a foal. Zopyrus, when they told him, not thinking that it could be true, went and saw the colt with his own eyes; after which he commanded his servants to tell no one what had come to pass, while he himself pondered the matter. Calling to mind then the words of the Babylonian at the beginning of the siege, "Till mules foal ye shall not take our city"—he thought, as he reflected on this speech, that Babylon might now be taken. For it seemed to him that there was a divine providence in the man having used the phrase, and then his mule having foaled.

154. As soon therefore as he felt within himself that Babylon was fated to be taken, he went to Darius and asked him if he set a very high value on its conquest. When he found that Darius did indeed value it highly, he considered further with himself how he might make the deed his own, and be the man to take Babylon. Noble exploits in Persia are ever highly honoured and bring their authors to greatness. He therefore reviewed all ways of bringing the city under, but found none by which he could hope to prevail, unless he maimed himself and then went over to the enemy. To do this seeming to him a light matter, he mutilated himself in a way that was utterly without remedy. For he cut off his own nose and ears, and then, clipping his hair close and flogging himself with a scourge, he came in this plight before Darius.

¹ Compare their confidence when besieged by Cyrus (*supra*, i. 190).

155. Wrath stirred within the king at the sight of a man of his lofty rank in such a condition; leaping down from his throne, he exclaimed aloud, and asked Zopyrus who it was that had disfigured him, and what he had done to be so treated. Zopyrus answered, "There is not a man in the world, but thou, O king, that could reduce me to such a plight—no stranger's hands have wrought this work on me, but my own only. I maimed myself because I could not endure that the Assyrians should laugh at the Persians." "Wretched man," said Darius, "thou coverest the foulest deed with the fairest possible name, when thou sayest thy maiming is to help our siege forward. How will thy disfigurement, thou simpleton, induce the enemy to yield one day the sooner? Surely thou hadst gone out of thy mind when thou didst so misuse thyself." "Had I told thee," rejoined the other, "what I was bent on doing, thou wouldest not have suffered it; as it is, I kept my own counsel, and so accomplished my plans. Now, therefore, if there be no failure on thy part, we shall take Babylon. I will desert to the enemy as I am, and when I get into their city I will tell them that it is by thee I have been thus treated. I think they will believe my words, and entrust me with a command of troops. Thou, on thy part, must wait till the tenth day after I am entered within the town, and then place near to the gates of Semiramis a detachment of thy army, troops for whose loss thou wilt care little, a thousand men. Wait, after that, seven days, and post me another detachment, two thousand strong, at the Nineveh gates; then let twenty days pass, and at the end of that time station near the Chaldæan gates a body of four thousand. Let neither these nor the former troops be armed with any weapons but their swords—those thou mayest leave them. After the twenty days are over, bid thy whole army attack the city on every side, and put me two bodies of Persians, one at the Belian, the other at the Cissian gates; for I expect, that, on account of my successes, the Babylonians will entrust everything, even the keys of their gates,¹ to me. Then it will be for me and my Persians to do the rest."²

156. Having left these instructions, Zopyrus fled towards the gates of the town, often looking back, to give himself the air of

¹ Properly "bolt-drawers," which were very like those now used in the East—a straight piece of wood, with upright pins, corresponding with those that fall down into the bolt, and which are pushed up by this key so as to enable the bolt to be drawn back.

² The stratagem of Zopyrus has small claims to be considered an historic fact.

a deserter. The men upon the towers, whose business it was to keep a look-out, observing him, hastened down, and setting one of the gates slightly ajar, questioned him who he was, and on what errand he had come. He replied that he was Zopyrus, and had deserted to them from the Persians. Then the doorkeepers, when they heard this, carried him at once before the Magistrates. Introduced into the assembly, he began to bewail his misfortunes, telling them that Darius had maltreated him in the way they could see, only because he had given advice that the siege should be raised, since there seemed no hope of taking the city. "And now," he went on to say, "my coming to you, Babylonians, will prove the greatest gain that you could possibly receive, while to Darius and the Persians it will be the severest loss. Verily he by whom I have been so mutilated shall not escape unpunished. And truly all the paths of his counsels are known to me." Thus did Zopyrus speak.

157. The Babylonians, seeing a Persian of such exalted rank in so grievous a plight, his nose and ears cut off, his body red with marks of scourging and with blood, had no suspicion but that he spoke the truth, and was really come to be their friend and helper. They were ready, therefore, to grant him anything that he asked; and on his suing for a command, they entrusted to him a body of troops, with the help of which he proceeded to do as he had arranged with Darius. On the tenth day after his flight he led out his detachment, and surrounding the thousand men, whom Darius according to agreement had sent first, he fell upon them and slew them all. Then the Babylonians, seeing that his deeds were as brave as his words, were beyond measure pleased, and set no bounds to their trust. He waited, however, and when the next period agreed on had elapsed, again with a band of picked men he sallied forth, and slaughtered the two thousand. After this second exploit, his praise was in all mouths. Once more, however, he waited till the interval appointed had gone by, and then leading the troops to the place where the four thousand were, he put them also to the sword. This last victory gave the finishing stroke to his power, and made him all in all with the Babylonians: accordingly they committed to him the command of their whole army, and put the keys of their city into his hands.

158. Darius now, still keeping to the plan agreed upon, attacked the walls on every side, whereupon Zopyrus played out the remainder of his stratagem. While the Babylonians, crowd-

ing to the walls, did their best to resist the Persian assault, he threw open the Cissian and the Belian gates, and admitted the enemy. Such of the Babylonians as witnessed the treachery, took refuge in the temple of Jupiter Belus;¹ the rest, who did not see it, kept at their posts, till at last they too learnt that they were betrayed.

159. Thus was Babylon taken for the second² time. Darius having become master of the place, destroyed the wall,³ and tore down all the gates; for Cyrus had done neither the one nor the other when he took Babylon. He then chose out near three thousand of the leading citizens, and caused them to be crucified, while he allowed the remainder still to inhabit the city. Further, wishing to prevent the race of the Babylonians from becoming extinct, he provided wives for them in the room of those whom (as I explained before) they strangled, to save their stores. These he levied from the nations bordering on Babylonia, who were each required to send so large a number to Babylon, that in all there were collected no fewer than fifty thousand. It is from these women that the Babylonians of our times are sprung.

160. As for Zopyrus, he was considered by Darius to have surpassed, in the greatness of his achievements, all other Persians, whether of former or of later times, except only Cyrus—with whom no Persian ever yet thought himself worthy to compare. Darius, as the story goes, would often say that “he had rather Zopyrus were unmaimed, than be master of twenty more Babylons.” And he honoured Zopyrus greatly; year by year he presented him with all the gifts which are held in most esteem among the Persians;⁴ he gave him likewise the government of Babylon for his life, free from tribute; and he also

¹ [Belus (*Bel*) was the name of the sun-god worshipped by the Babylonians. The city-god of Babylon was Marduk; but, as that city became the capital of the country, he became identified with Bel (cf. *Baal*), the “lord.” Cf. Sayce, *The Religions of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia*, p. 267.—E. H. B.]

² [The first capture, by Cyrus, is described in Book i. chs. 190, 191.—E. H. B.]

³ It is probable that Darius contented himself with breaking breaches in the great wall, instead of undertaking the enormous and useless labour of levelling the immense mounds which begirt Babylon. The walls must have been tolerably complete when Babylon stood a siege against the forces of Xerxes. Even in the time of Herodotus, so much was left that he could speak of the wall as still *encircling* the city (i. 178).

⁴ Ctesias mentioned as the chief of these presents a golden hand-mill, weighing six talents, and worth somewhat more than £3000. This, according to him, was the most honourable gift that a Persian subject could receive.

granted him many other favours. Megabyzus, who held the command in Egypt against the Athenians and their allies,¹ was a son of this Zopyrus. And Zopyrus, who fled from Persia to Athens,² was a son of this Megabyzus.

¹ Megabyzus married Amytis, daughter of Xerxes, was one of the six superior generals of the Persian army in the Greek campaign, drove the Athenians out of Egypt, and put down the Egyptian revolt; revolted himself against Artaxerxes for not observing the terms granted to Inarus, was reconciled with him, and died in Persia at an advanced age.

² This is probably the latest event recorded by Herodotus. It is mentioned by Ctesias almost immediately before the death of Artaxerxes, and so belongs most likely to the year B.C. 426 or 425.

ADDED NOTE BY THE EDITOR

With the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, the history of the Babylonians as an independent nation came to an end. Henceforth it became a province subject to the various powers which succeeded one another in the hegemony of western Asia. Under Cambyzes, and still more under Darius Hystaspis, there were many manifestations of discontent, which broke out into open revolt soon after the accession of the latter king. A similar revolt took place in Xerxes' reign; but both these insurrectionary movements were stamped out. The people of Babylonia were, as a whole, content to serve their foreign masters. The country remained subject to Persian domination until the conquests of Alexander the Great brought it under Greek control; this subsequently giving way to Parthian supremacy. The impoverishment of the country, in these later days, led to the gradual extinction of the great priestly tradition which had so long maintained itself. The knowledge of the ancient writings and speech was gradually lost, and not recovered till the epoch-marking discoveries of Sir Henry Rawlinson and other scholars in the middle of the nineteenth century. But now every year sees fresh light thrown upon the history and religion of a once mighty, and long-forgotten, empire. And the end is not yet.

THE FOURTH BOOK, ENTITLED MELPOMENE

1. AFTER the taking of Babylon, an expedition was led by Darius into Scythia. Asia abounding in men, and vast sums flowing into the treasury, the desire seized him to exact vengeance from the Scyths, who had once in days gone by invaded Media, defeated those who met them in the field, and so begun the quarrel. During the space of eight-and-twenty years, as I have before mentioned,¹ the Scyths continued lords of the whole of Upper Asia. They entered Asia in pursuit of the Cimmerians, and overthrew the empire of the Medes, who till they came possessed the sovereignty. On their return to their homes after the long absence of twenty-eight years, a task awaited them little less troublesome than their struggle with the Medes. They found an army of no small size prepared to oppose their entrance. For the Scythian women, when they saw that time went on, and their husbands did not come back, had intermarried with their slaves.

2. Now the Scythians blind all their slaves, to use them in preparing their milk. The plan they follow is to thrust tubes made of bone, not unlike our musical pipes, up the vulva of the mare,² and then to blow into the tubes with their mouths, some milking while the others blow. They say that they do this because when the veins of the animal are full of air, the udder is forced down. The milk thus obtained is poured into deep wooden casks, about which the blind slaves are placed, and then the milk is stirred round.³ That which rises to the top is drawn off, and considered the best part; the under portion is of less account. Such is the reason why the Scythians blind all those whom they take in war; it arises from their not being tillers of the ground, but a pastoral race.

3. When therefore the children sprung from these slaves and

¹ Vide supra, i. 103-106.

² Mares' milk constituted the chief food of the ancient Scythians. It is still the principal support of the Calmuck hordes which wander over the vast steppes north and west of the Caspian.

³ It is apparent from this circumstance that it was *koumiss*, and not cream, on which the Scythians lived. *Koumiss* is still prepared from mares' milk by the Calmucks.

the Scythian women grew to manhood, and understood the circumstances of their birth, they resolved to oppose the army which was returning from Media. And, first of all, they cut off a tract of country from the rest of Scythia by digging a broad dyke¹ from the Tauric mountains to the vast lake of the Mæotis. Afterwards, when the Scythians tried to force an entrance, they marched out and engaged them. Many battles were fought, and the Scythians gained no advantage, until at last one of them thus addressed the remainder: "What are we doing, Scythians? We are fighting our slaves, diminishing our own number when we fall, and the number of those that belong to us when they fall by our hands. Take my advice—lay spear and bow aside,² and let each man fetch his horsewhip,³ and go boldly up to them. So long as they see us with arms in our hands, they imagine themselves our equals in birth and bravery; but let them behold us with no other weapon but the whip, and they will feel that they are our slaves, and flee before us."

4. The Scythians followed this counsel, and the slaves were so astounded, that they forgot to fight, and immediately ran away. Such was the mode in which the Scythians, after being for a time the lords of Asia, and being forced to quit it by the Medes, returned and settled in their own country. This inroad of theirs it was that Darius was anxious to avenge, and such was the purpose for which he was now collecting an army to invade them.

5. According to the account which the Scythians themselves give, they are the youngest of all nations.⁴ Their tradition is as follows. A certain Targitaüs was the first man who ever lived in their country, which before his time was a desert without inhabitants. He was a child—I do not believe the tale, but it is told nevertheless—of Jove and a daughter of the Borysthenes. Targitaüs, thus descended, begat three sons, Leipoxais, Arpoxais, and Colaxais, who was the youngest born of the three. While they still ruled the land, there fell from the sky four implements,

¹ On the position of this dyke, vide *infra*, ch. 20.

² The spear and the bow were the national weapons of the European Scyths, the bow on the whole being regarded as the more essential. The spear used was short, apparently not more than five feet in length.

³ The ancient Scythian whip seems to have closely resembled the *nogaik* of the modern Cossacks.

⁴ We must understand by the Scyths of Herodotus in this place, the single nation of European Scyths with which the Greeks of the Pontus were acquainted.

all of gold,—a plough, a yoke, a battle-axe, and a drinking-cup. The eldest of the brothers perceived them first, and approached to pick them up; when lo! as he came near, the gold took fire, and blazed. He therefore went his way, and the second coming forward made the attempt, but the same thing happened again. The gold rejected both the eldest and the second brother. Last of all the youngest brother approached, and immediately the flames were extinguished; so he picked up the gold, and carried it to his home. Then the two elder agreed together, and made the whole kingdom over to the youngest born.

6. From Leipoxais sprang the Scythians of the race called Auchataë; from Arpoxais, the middle brother, those known as the Catiari and Trasprians; from Colaxais, the youngest, the Royal Scythians, or Paralataë. All together they are named Scoloti, after one of their kings: the Greeks, however, call them Scythians.

7. Such is the account which the Scythians give of their origin. They add that from the time of Targitaüs, their first king, to the invasion of their country by Darius, is a period of one thousand years, neither less nor more. The Royal Scythians guard the sacred gold with most especial care, and year by year offer great sacrifices in its honour. At this feast, if the man who has the custody of the gold should fall asleep in the open air, he is sure (the Scythians say) not to outlive the year. His pay therefore is as much land as he can ride round on horseback in a day. As the extent of Scythia is very great, Colaxais gave each of his three sons a separate kingdom, one of which was of ampler size than the other two: in this the gold was preserved. Above, to the northward of the furthest dwellers in Scythia, the country is said to be concealed from sight and made impassable by reason of the feathers which are shed abroad abundantly. The earth and air are alike full of them, and this it is which prevents the eye from obtaining any view of the region.¹

8. Such is the account which the Scythians give of themselves, and of the country which lies above them. The Greeks who dwell about the Pontus tell a different story. According to them, Hercules, when he was carrying off the cows of Geryon, arrived in the region which is now inhabited by the Scythians, but which was then a desert. Geryon lived outside the Pontus, in

¹ Vide infra, ch. 31, where Herodotus explains that the so-called feathers are snow-flakes.

an island called by the Greeks Erytheia,¹ near Gades, which is beyond the Pillars of Hercules² upon the Ocean. Now some say that the Ocean begins in the east, and runs the whole way round the world; but they give no proof that this is really so. Hercules came from thence into the region now called Scythia, and, being overtaken by storm and frost, drew his lion's skin about him, and fell fast asleep. While he slept, his mares, which he had loosed from his chariot to graze, by some wonderful chance disappeared.

9. On waking, he went in quest of them, and, after wandering over the whole country, came at last to the district called "the Woodland," where he found in a cave a strange being, between a maiden and a serpent, whose form from the waist upwards was like that of a woman, while all below was like a snake. He looked at her wonderingly; but nevertheless inquired, whether she had chanced to see his strayed mares anywhere. She answered him, "Yes, and they were now in her keeping; but never would she consent to give them back, unless he took her for his mistress." So Hercules, to get his mares back, agreed; but afterwards she put him off and delayed restoring the mares, since she wished to keep him with her as long as possible. He, on the other hand, was only anxious to secure them and to get away. At last, when she gave them up, she said to him, "When thy mares strayed hither, it was I who saved them for thee: now thou hast paid their salvage; for lo! I bear in my womb three sons of thine. Tell me therefore when thy sons grow up, what must I do with them? Wouldst thou wish that I should settle them here in this land, whereof I am mistress, or shall I send them to thee?" Thus questioned, they say, Hercules answered, "When the lads have grown to manhood, do thus, and assuredly thou wilt not err. Watch them, and when thou seest one of them bend this bow as I now bend it, and gird himself with this girdle thus, choose *him* to remain in the land. Those who fail in the trial, send away. Thus wilt thou at once please thyself and obey me."

10. Hereupon he strung one of his bows—up to that time he had carried two—and showed her how to fasten the belt. Then he gave both bow and belt into her hands. Now the belt had a golden goblet attached to its clasp. So after he had given them to her, he went his way; and the woman, when her

¹ Cadiz.

² By the Pillars of Hercules we must understand the Straits of Gibraltar.

children grew to manhood, first gave them severally their names. One she called Agathyrsus, one Gelônus, and the other, who was the youngest, Scythes. Then she remembered the instructions she had received from Hercules, and, in obedience to his orders, she put her sons to the test. Two of them, Agathyrsus and Gelônus, proving unequal to the task enjoined, their mother sent them out of the land; Scythes, the youngest, succeeded, and so he was allowed to remain. From Scythes, the son of Hercules, were descended the after kings of Scythia; and from the circumstance of the goblet which hung from the belt, the Scythians to this day wear goblets at their girdles. This was the only thing which the mother of Scythes did for him. Such is the tale told by the Greeks who dwell around the Pontus.

II. There is also another different story, now to be related, in which I am more inclined to put faith than in any other. It is that the wandering Scythians once dwelt in Asia, and there warred with the Massagetæ, but with ill success; they therefore quitted their homes, crossed the Araxes,¹ and entered the land of Cimmeria. For the land which is now inhabited by the Scyths was formerly the country of the Cimmerians.² On their coming, the natives, who heard how numerous the invading army was, held a council. At this meeting opinion was divided, and both parties stiffly maintained their own view; but the counsel of the Royal tribe was the braver. For the others urged that the best thing to be done was to leave the country, and avoid a contest with so vast a host; but the Royal tribe advised remaining and fighting for the soil to the last. As neither party chose to give way, the one determined to retire without a blow and yield their lands to the invaders; but the other, remembering the good things which they had enjoyed in their homes, and picturing to themselves the evils which they had to expect if they gave them up, resolved not to flee, but rather to die and at least be buried in their fatherland. Having thus decided, they drew apart in two bodies, the one as numerous as the other, and fought together. All of the Royal tribe were slain, and the people buried them near the river Tyras, where their grave is still to be seen. Then the rest of the Cimmerians departed, and the Scythians, on their coming, took possession of a deserted land.

¹ It seems impossible that the Araxes can here represent any river but the Volga.

² Their name is still found in the modern name, Crimea.

12. Scythia still retains traces of the Cimmerians; there are Cimmerian castles, and a Cimmerian ferry, also a tract called Cimmeria, and a Cimmerian Bosphorus. It appears likewise that the Cimmerians, when they fled into Asia to escape the Scyths, made a settlement in the peninsula where the Greek city of Sinôpé was afterwards built. The Scyths, it is plain, pursued them, and missing their road, poured into Media. For the Cimmerians kept the line which led along the sea-shore, but the Scyths in their pursuit held the Caucasus upon their right, thus proceeding inland, and falling upon Media. This account is one which is common both to Greeks and barbarians.

13. Aristéas also, son of Caÿstrobíus, a native of Proconnêsus,¹ says in the course of his poem that rapt in Bacchic fury he went as far as the Issedones. Above them dwelt the Arimaspi, men with one eye; still further, the gold-guarding Griffins;² and beyond these, the Hyperboreans, who extended to the sea. Except the Hyperboreans, all these nations, beginning with the Arimaspi, were continually encroaching upon their neighbours. Hence it came to pass that the Arimaspi drove the Issedonians from their country, while the Issedonians dispossessed the Scyths; and the Scyths, pressing upon the Cimmerians, who dwelt on the shores of the Southern Sea,³ forced them to leave their land.⁴ Thus even Aristéas does not agree in his account of this region with the Scythians.

14. The birthplace of Aristéas, the poet who sung of these things, I have already mentioned. I will now relate a tale which I heard concerning him both at Proconnêsus and at Cyzicus. Aristéas, they said, who belonged to one of the noblest families in the island, had entered one day into a fuller's shop, when he suddenly dropt down dead. Hereupon the fuller shut up his shop, and went to tell Aristéas' kindred what had happened. The report of the death had just spread through the town, when a certain Cyzicénian, lately arrived from Artaca,⁵ contradicted the rumour, affirming that he had met Aristéas

¹ Proconnêsus is the island now called *Marmora*, which gives its modern appellation to the Propontis (Sea of Marmora).

² Vide supra, iii. 116.

³ That is, the Euxine.

⁴ The poem of Aristéas indicated an important general fact, viz., the perpetual pressure on one another of the nomadic hordes which from time immemorial have occupied the vast steppes of Central and Northern Asia, and of Eastern Europe.

⁵ The name remains in the modern *Erdek*, which has taken the place of Cyzicus (*Bal Kiz*), now in ruins, and is the see of an archbishop.

on his road to Cyzicus, and had spoken with him. This man, therefore, strenuously denied the rumour; the relations, however, proceeded to the fuller's shop with all things necessary for the funeral, intending to carry the body away. But on the shop being opened, no Aristeas was found, either dead or alive. Seven years afterwards he reappeared, they told me, in Proconnêsus, and wrote the poem called by the Greeks "The Arimaspeia," after which he disappeared a second time. This is the tale current in the two cities above mentioned.

15. What follows I know to have happened to the Metapontines of Italy, three hundred and forty years¹ after the second disappearance of Aristeas, as I collect by comparing the accounts given me at Proconnêsus and Metapontum.² Aristeas then, as the Metapontines affirm, appeared to them in their own country, and ordered them to set up an altar in honour of Apollo, and to place near it a statue to be called that of Aristeas the Proconnêsiian. "Apollo," he told them, "had come to their country once, though he had visited no other Italiots; and he had been with Apollo at the time, not however in his present form, but in the shape of a crow."³ Having said so much, he vanished. Then the Metapontines, as they relate, sent to Delphi, and inquired of the god, in what light they were to regard the appearance of this ghost of a man. The Pythoness, in reply, bade them attend to what the spectre said, "for so it would go best with them." Thus advised, they did as they had been directed: and there is now a statue bearing the name of Aristeas, close by the image of Apollo in the market-place of Metapontum, with bay-trees standing around it. But enough has been said concerning Aristeas.

16. With regard to the regions which lie above the country whereof this portion of my history treats, there is no one who possesses any exact knowledge. Not a single person can I find who professes to be acquainted with them by actual observation. Even Aristeas, the traveller of whom I lately spoke, does not claim—and he is writing poetry—to have reached any farther than the Issedonians. What he relates concerning the regions

¹ This date must certainly be wrong. The date usually assigned to Aristeas is about B.C. 580.

² Metapontum (the modern *Basiento*), was distant about 50 miles from Thurii, where Herodotus lived during his later years.

³ Natural superstition first regarded the croak of the crow or raven as an omen; after which it was natural to attach the bird to the God of Prophecy. The crow is often called the companion or attendant of Apollo.

beyond is, he confesses, mere hearsay, being the account which the Issedonians gave him of those countries. However, I shall proceed to mention all that I have learnt of these parts by the most exact inquiries which I have been able to make concerning them.

17. Above the mart of the Borysthenites, which is situated in the very centre of the whole sea-coast of Scythia, the first people who inhabit the land are the Callipedæ, a Græco-Scythic race. Next to them, as you go inland, dwell the people called the Alazonians. These two nations in other respects resemble the Scythians in their usages, but sow and eat corn, also onions, garlic, lentils, and millet.¹ Beyond the Alazonians reside Scythian cultivators, who grow corn, not for their own use, but for sale.² Still higher up are the Neuri.³ Northwards of the Neuri the continent, as far as it is known to us, is uninhabited. These are the nations along the course of the river Hypanis,⁴ west of the Borysthenes.⁵

18. Across the Borysthenes, the first country after you leave the coast is Hylæa (the Woodland).⁶ Above this dwell the Scythian Husbandmen, whom the Greeks living near the Hypanis call Borysthenites, while they call themselves Olbiopolites. These Husbandmen extend eastward a distance of three days' journey to a river bearing the name of Panticapes,⁷ while northward the country is theirs for eleven days' sail up the course of the Borysthenes. Further inland there is a vast tract which is uninhabited. Above this desolate region dwell the Cannibals, who are a people apart, much unlike the Scythians. Above them the country becomes an utter desert; not a single tribe, so far as we know, inhabits it.

19. Crossing the Panticapes, and proceeding eastward of the Husbandmen, we come upon the wandering Scythians, who neither plough nor sow. Their country, and the whole of this

¹ Millet is still largely cultivated in these regions. It forms almost the only cereal food of the Nogais.

² The corn-trade of the Scythians appears to have been chiefly, if not exclusively, with the Greeks.

³ Vide *infra*, ch. 105.

⁴ The modern *Bug* or *Boug*.

⁵ The modern *Dnieper*.

⁶ Portions of this country are still thickly wooded, and contrast remarkably with the general bare and arid character of the steppe.

⁷ Here the description of Herodotus, which has been hitherto excellent, begins to fail. There is at present no river which at all corresponds with his Panticapes. Either the face of the country must have greatly altered since his time, or he must have obtained a confused and incorrect account.

region, except Hylæa, is quite bare of trees.¹ They extend towards the east a distance of fourteen ² days' journey, occupying a tract which reaches to the river Gerrhus.³

20. On the opposite side of the Gerrhus is the Royal district, as it is called: here dwells the largest and bravest of the Scythian tribes, which looks upon all the other tribes in the light of slaves.⁴ Its country reaches on the south to Taurica,⁵ on the east to the trench dug by the sons of the blind slaves, the mart upon the Palus Mæotis, called Cremni (the Cliffs), and in part to the river Tanais.⁶ North of the country of the Royal Scythians are the Melanchlæni (Black-Robes),⁷ a people of quite a different race from the Scythians. Beyond them lie marshes and a region without inhabitants, so far as our knowledge reaches.

21. When one crosses the Tanais, one is no longer in Scythia; the first region on crossing is that of the Sauromatæ,⁸ who, beginning at the upper end of the Palus Mæotis, stretch northward a distance of fifteen days' journey, inhabiting a country which is entirely bare of trees, whether wild or cultivated.⁹ Above them, possessing the second region, dwell the Budini,¹⁰ whose territory is thickly wooded with trees of every kind.

22. Beyond the Budini, as one goes northward, first there is a desert, seven days' journey across; after which, if one inclines somewhat to the east, the Thyssagetæ are reached, a numerous nation quite distinct from any other, and living by the chase. Adjoining them, and within the limits of the same region, are the people who bear the name of Iyrçæ; they also support themselves by hunting, which they practise in the following manner. The hunter climbs a tree, the whole country abounding in wood, and there sets himself in ambush; he has a dog at hand, and a horse, trained to lie down upon its belly, and thus make itself low; the hunter keeps watch, and when he sees his

¹ The general treeless character of the steppes is noticed by all travellers.

² Rennell proposes to read "four days' journey"—and indeed without some such alteration the geography of this part of Scythia is utterly inexplicable.

³ Vide infra, ch. 56.

⁴ The analogous case of the Golden Horde among the Mongols has been adduced by many writers.

⁵ Taurica appears here to be nothing but the high tract along the southern coast of the Crimea.

⁶ Now the *Don*.

⁷ Vide infra, ch. 107.

⁸ Vide infra, ch. 110.

⁹ The ancient country of the Sauromatæ or Sarmatæ (Sarmatians) appears to have been nearly identical with that of the modern Don Cossacks.

¹⁰ Vide infra, ch. 108.

game, lets fly an arrow; then mounting his horse, he gives the beast chase, his dog following hard all the while. Beyond these people, a little to the east, dwells a distinct tribe of Scyths, who revolted once from the Royal Scythians, and migrated into these parts.

23. As far as their country, the tract of land whereof I have been speaking is all a smooth plain, and the soil deep; beyond you enter on a region which is rugged and stony. Passing over a great extent of this rough country, you come to a people dwelling at the foot of lofty mountains,¹ who are said to be all—both men and women—bald from their birth, to have flat noses, and very long chins. These people speak a language of their own, but the dress which they wear is the same as the Scythian. They live on the fruit of a certain tree, the name of which is Ponticum;² in size it is about equal to our fig-tree, and it bears a fruit like a bean, with a stone inside. When the fruit is ripe, they strain it through cloths; the juice which runs off is black and thick, and is called by the natives “aschy.” They lap this up with their tongues, and also mix it with milk for a drink; while they make the lees, which are solid, into cakes, and eat them instead of meat; for they have but few sheep in their country, in which there is no good pasturage. Each of them dwells under a tree, and they cover the tree in winter with a cloth of thick white felt, but take off the covering in the summer-time. No one harms these people, for they are looked upon as sacred,—they do not even possess any warlike weapons. When their neighbours fall out, they make up the quarrel; and when one flies to them for refuge, he is safe from all hurt. They are called the Argippæans.

24. Up to this point the territory of which we are speaking is very completely explored, and all the nations between the coast and the bald-headed men are well known to us. For some of the Scythians are accustomed to penetrate as far, of whom inquiry may easily be made, and Greeks also go there from the mart on the Borysthenes, and from the other marts along the Euxine. The Scythians who make this journey communicate with the inhabitants by means of seven interpreters and seven languages.

25. Thus far therefore the land is known; but beyond the

¹ The chain of the Ural.

² A species of cherry, which is eaten by the Calmucks of the present day in almost the same manner.

bald-headed men lies a region of which no one can give any exact account. Lofty and precipitous mountains, which are never crossed, bar further progress.¹ The bald men say, but it does not seem to me credible, that the people who live in these mountains have feet like goats; and that after passing them you find another race of men, who sleep during one half of the year. This latter statement appears to me quite unworthy of credit. The region east of the bald-headed men is well known to be inhabited by the Issedonians, but the tract that lies to the north of these two nations is entirely unknown, except by the accounts which they give of it.

26. The Issedonians are said to have the following customs. When a man's father dies, all the near relatives bring sheep to the house; which are sacrificed, and their flesh cut in pieces, while at the same time the dead body undergoes the like treatment. The two sorts of flesh are afterwards mixed together, and the whole is served up at a banquet. The head of the dead man is treated differently: it is stripped bare, cleansed, and set in gold.² It then becomes an ornament on which they pride themselves, and is brought out year by year at the great festival which sons keep in honour of their fathers' death, just as the Greeks keep their Genesia. In other respects the Issedonians are reputed to be observers of justice: and it is to be remarked that their women have equal authority with the men.³ Thus our knowledge extends as far as this nation.

27. The regions beyond are known only from the accounts of the Issedonians, by whom the stories are told of the one-eyed race of men and the gold-guarding griffins. These stories are received by the Scythians from the Issedonians, and by them passed on to us Greeks: whence it arises that we give the one-eyed race the Scythian name of Arimaspi, "*arima*" being the Scythic word for "one," and "*spû*" for "the eye."

28. The whole district whereof we have here discoursed has winters of exceeding rigour. During eight months the frost is so intense that water poured upon the ground does not form

¹ Heeren considers the mountains here spoken of to be the Altai; but to me it seems that Herodotus in these chapters speaks only of a single mountain-chain, and that is the Ural.

² Compare the Scythian custom with respect to the skulls of enemies (infra, ch. 65). A similar practice to theirs is ascribed by Livy to the Boii, a tribe of Gauls (xxiii. 24).

³ And among the Nairs of Malabar the institutions all incline to a gynocracy, each woman having several husbands, and property passing through the female line in preference to the male.

mud, but if a fire be lighted on it mud is produced. The sea freezes, and the Cimmerian Bosphorus is frozen over. At that season the Scythians who dwell inside the trench make warlike expeditions upon the ice, and even drive their waggons across to the country of the Sindians. Such is the intensity of the cold during eight months out of the twelve; and even in the remaining four the climate is still cool.¹ The character of the winter likewise is unlike that of the same season in any other country; for at that time, when the rains ought to fall in Scythia, there is scarcely any rain worth mentioning, while in summer it never gives over raining; and thunder, which elsewhere is frequent then, in Scythia is unknown in that part of the year, coming only in summer, when it is very heavy. Thunder in the winter-time is there accounted a prodigy; as also are earthquakes, whether they happen in winter or summer. Horses bear the winter well, cold as it is, but mules and asses are quite unable to bear it; whereas in other countries mules and asses are found to endure the cold, while horses, if they stand still, are frost-bitten.

29. To me it seems that the cold may likewise be the cause which prevents the oxen in Scythia from having horns. There is a line of Homer's in the *Odyssey* which gives a support to my opinion:—

“Lybia too, where horns bud quick on the foreheads of lambskins.”²

He means to say, what is quite true, that in warm countries the horns come early. So too in countries where the cold is severe animals either have no horns, or grow them with difficulty—the cold being the cause in this instance.

30. Here I must express my wonder—additions being what my work always from the very first affected—that in Elis, where the cold is not remarkable, and there is nothing else to account for it, mules are never produced. The Eleans say it is in consequence of a curse;³ and their habit is, when the breeding-time comes, to take their mares into one of the adjoining

¹ The clearing of forests and the spread of agriculture have tended to render the climate of these regions less severe than in the time of Herodotus. Still, even at the present day, the south of Russia has a six months' winter, lasting from October to April. From November to March the cold is, ordinarily, very intense. The summer is now intensely hot.

² *Odyss.* iv. 85.

³ According to Plutarch, CEnomaüs, king of Elis, out of his love for horses, laid heavy curses on the breeding of mules in that country.

countries, and there keep them till they are in foal, when they bring them back again into Elis.

31. With respect to the feathers which are said by the Scythians to fill the air,¹ and to prevent persons from penetrating into the remoter parts of the continent, or even having any view of those regions, my opinion is, that in the countries above Scythia it always snows—less, of course, in the summer than in the winter-time. Now snow when it falls looks like feathers, as every one is aware who has seen it come down close to him. These northern regions, therefore, are uninhabitable, by reason of the severity of the winter; and the Scythians, with their neighbours, call the snow-flakes feathers because, I think, of the likeness which they bear to them. I have now related what is said of the most distant parts of this continent whereof any account is given.

32. Of the Hyperboreans nothing is said either by the Scythians or by any of the other dwellers in these regions, unless it be the Issedonians. But in my opinion, even the Issedonians are silent concerning them; otherwise the Scythians would have repeated their statements, as they do those concerning the one-eyed men. Hesiod, however, mentions them, and Homer also in the *Epigoni*, if that be really a work of his.²

33. But the persons who have by far the most to say on this subject are the Delians. They declare that certain offerings, packed in wheaten straw, were brought from the country of the Hyperboreans³ into Scythia, and that the Scythians received them and passed them on to their neighbours upon the west, who continued to pass them on until at last they reached the Adriatic. From hence they were sent southward, and when they came to Greece, were received first of all by the Dodonæans. Thence they descended to the Maliac Gulf, from which they were carried across into Eubœa, where the people handed them on from city to city, till they came at length to Carystus.

¹ Supra, ch. 7, ad fin.

² An epic poem, in hexameter verse, on the subject of the second siege of Thebes by the sons of those killed in the first siege. It was a sequel to another very ancient epic, the *Thebais*, which was upon the first Theban war.

³ Very elaborate accounts have been given of the Hyperboreans both in ancient and modern times. They are, however, in reality not an historical, but an ideal nation. The North Wind being given a local seat in certain mountains called Rhipæan (from *ῥιπή*, "a blast"), it was supposed there must be a country above the north wind, which would not be cold, and which would have inhabitants. Ideal perfections were gradually ascribed to this region.

The Carystians took them over to Tenos, without stopping at Andros; and the Tenians brought them finally to Delos. Such, according to their own account, was the road by which the offerings reached the Delians. Two damsels, they say, named Hyperoché and Laodicé, brought the first offerings from the Hyperboreans; and with them the Hyperboreans sent five men, to keep them from all harm by the way; these are the persons whom the Delians call "Perpherees," and to whom great honours are paid at Delos. Afterwards the Hyperboreans, when they found that their messengers did not return, thinking it would be a grievous thing always to be liable to lose the envoys they should send, adopted the following plan:—they wrapped their offerings in the wheaten straw, and bearing them to their borders, charged their neighbours to send them forward from one nation to another, which was done accordingly, and in this way the offerings reached Delos. I myself know of a practice like this, which obtains with the women of Thrace and Pæonia. They in their sacrifices to the queenly Diana bring wheaten straw always with their offerings. Of my own knowledge I can testify that this is so.

34. The damsels sent by the Hyperboreans died in Delos; and in their honour all the Delian girls and youths are wont to cut off their hair. The girls, before their marriage-day, cut off a curl, and twining it round a distaff, lay it upon the grave of the strangers. This grave is on the left as one enters the precinct of Diana, and has an olive-tree growing on it. The youths wind some of their hair round a kind of grass, and, like the girls, place it upon the tomb. Such are the honours paid to these damsels by the Delians.

35. They add that, once before, there came to Delos by the same road as Hyperoché and Laodicé, two other virgins from the Hyperboreans, whose names were Argé and Opis. Hyperoché and Laodicé came to bring to Ilithyia the offering which they had laid upon themselves, in acknowledgment of their quick labours; but Argé and Opis came at the same time as the gods of Delos,¹ and are honoured by the Delians in a different way. For the Delian women make collections in these maidens' names, and invoke them in the hymn which Olen, a Lycian, composed for them; and the rest of the islanders, and even the Ionians, have been taught by the Delians to do the like. This Olen, who came from Lycia, made the other old

¹ Apollo and Diana.

hymns also which are sung in Delos. The Delians add, that the ashes from the thigh-bones burnt upon the altar are scattered over the tomb of Opis and Argé. Their tomb lies behind the temple of Diana, facing the east, near the banqueting-hall of the Ceians. Thus much then, and no more, concerning the Hyperboreans.

36. As for the tale of Abaris, who is said to have been a Hyperborean, and to have gone with his arrow all round the world without once eating, I shall pass it by in silence. Thus much, however, is clear: if there are Hyperboreans, there must also be Hypernotians. For my part, I cannot but laugh when I see numbers of persons drawing maps of the world without having any reason to guide them; making, as they do, the ocean-stream to run all round the earth, and the earth itself to be an exact circle, as if described by a pair of compasses,¹ with Europe and Asia just of the same size. The truth in this matter I will now proceed to explain in a very few words, making it clear what the real size of each region is, and what shape should be given them.

37. The Persians inhabit a country upon the southern or Erythræan sea; above them, to the north, are the Medes; beyond the Medes, the Sasprians; beyond them, the Colchians, reaching to the northern sea, into which the Phasis empties itself. These four nations fill the whole space from one sea to the other.

38. West of these nations there project into the sea two tracts which I will now describe; one, beginning at the river Phasis on the north, stretches along the Euxine and the Hellespont to Sigeum in the Troas; while on the south it reaches from the Myriandrian gulf,² which adjoins Phœnicia, to the Triopic promontory. This is one of the tracts, and is inhabited by thirty different nations.

39. The other starts from the country of the Persians, and stretches into the Erythræan sea, containing first Persia, then Assyria, and after Assyria, Arabia. It ends, that is to say it is considered to end, though it does not really come to a termination,³ at the Arabian gulf—the gulf whereinto Darius conducted

¹ The belief which Herodotus ridicules is not that of the world's spherical form, what had not yet been suspected by the Greeks, but a false notion of the configuration of the land on the earth's surface.

² Or Bay of Issus [a city in the S.E. extremity of Cilicia, in Asia Minor.—E. H. B.].

³ Since Egypt adjoins Arabia.

the canal which he made from the Nile.¹ Between Persia and Phœnicia lies a broad and ample tract of country, after which the region I am describing skirts our sea,² stretching from Phœnicia along the coast of Palestine-Syria till it comes to Egypt, where it terminates. This entire tract contains but three nations.³ The whole of Asia west of the country of the Persians is comprised in these two regions.

40. Beyond the tract occupied by the Persians, Medes, Saspirians, and Colchians, towards the east and the region of the sunrise, Asia is bounded on the south by the Erythræan sea, and on the north by the Caspian and the river Araxes, which flows towards the rising sun. Till you reach India the country is peopled; but further east it is void of inhabitants, and no one can say what sort of region it is. Such then is the shape, and such the size of Asia.

41. Libya belongs to one of the above-mentioned tracts, for it adjoins on Egypt. In Egypt the tract is at first a narrow neck, the distance from our sea to the Erythræan not exceeding a hundred thousand fathoms, or, in other words, a thousand furlongs;⁴ but from the point where the neck ends, the tract which bears the name of Libya is of very great breadth.

42. For my part I am astonished that men should ever have divided Libya, Asia, and Europe as they have, for they are exceedingly unequal. Europe extends the entire length of the other two, and for breadth will not even (as I think) bear to be compared to them. As for Libya, we know it to be washed on all sides by the sea, except where it is attached to Asia. This discovery was first made by Necôs,⁵ the Egyptian king, who on desisting from the canal which he had begun between the Nile and the Arabian Gulf,⁶ sent to sea a number of ships manned by Phœnicians, with orders to make for the Pillars of Hercules,⁷ and return to Egypt through them, and by the

¹ This was the completion of the canal which Neco found it prudent to desist from re-opening, through fear of the growing power of Babylon. It was originally a canal of Rameses II., which had been filled up by the sand.

² The Mediterranean. (See Book i. ch. 185.)

³ The Assyrians (among whom the Palestine *Syrians* were included), the Arabians, and the Phœnicians.

⁴ Modern surveys show that the direct distance across the isthmus is not so much as 80 miles.

⁵ We may infer, from Neco's ordering the Phœnicians to come round by the "Pillars of Hercules," that the form of Africa was *already* known, and that this was not the first expedition which had gone round it.

⁶ Vide supra, ii. 158.

⁷ They were so called, not from the Greek hero, but from the Tyrian

Mediterranean. The Phœnicians took their departure from Egypt by way of the Erythræan Sea, and so sailed into the southern ocean. When autumn came, they went ashore, wherever they might happen to be, and having sown a tract of land with corn, waited until the grain was fit to cut. Having reaped it, they again set sail; and thus it came to pass that two whole years went by, and it was not till the third year that they doubled the Pillars of Hercules, and made good their voyage home. On their return, they declared—I for my part do not believe them, but perhaps others may—that in sailing round Libya they had the sun upon their right hand.¹ In this way was the extent of Libya first discovered.

43. Next to these Phœnicians the Carthaginians, according to their own accounts, made the voyage. For Sataspes, son of Teaspes the Achæmenian, did not circumnavigate Libya, though he was sent to do so; but, fearing the length and desolateness of the journey, he turned back and left unaccomplished the task which had been set him by his mother. This man had used violence towards a maiden, the daughter of Zopyrus, son of Megabyzus,² and King Xerxes was about to impale him for the offence, when his mother, who was a sister of Darius, begged him off, undertaking to punish his crime more heavily than the king himself had designed. She would force him, she said, to sail round Libya and return to Egypt by the Arabian Gulf. Xerxes gave his consent; and Sataspes went down to Egypt, and there got a ship and crew, with which he set sail for the Pillars of Hercules. Having passed the Straits, he doubled the Libyan headland, known as Cape Soloeis,³ and proceeded southward. Following this course for many months over a vast stretch of sea, and finding that more water than he had crossed still lay ever before him, he put about, and came back to Egypt. Thence proceeding to the court, he made report to Xerxes, that at the farthest point to which he had reached, the coast was occupied by a dwarfish race,⁴ who wore a dress made from the deity, whose worship was always introduced by the Phœnicians in their settlements.

¹ Here the faithful reporting of what he did not himself imagine true has stood our author in good stead. Few would have believed the Phœnician circumnavigation of Africa had it not been vouched for by this discovery. When Herodotus is blamed for repeating the absurd stories which he had been told, it should be considered what we must have lost had he made it a rule to reject from his History all that he thought unlikely.

² Vide supra, iii. 160.

³ The modern Cape Spartel.

⁴ This is the second mention of a dwarfish race in Africa (see above, ii. 32).

palm-tree. These people, whenever he landed, left their towns and fled away to the mountains; his men, however, did them no wrong, only entering into their cities and taking some of their cattle. The reason why he had not sailed quite round Libya was, he said, because the ship stopped, and would not go any further. Xerxes, however, did not accept this account for true; and so Sataspes, as he had failed to accomplish the task set him, was impaled by the king's orders in accordance with the former sentence.¹ One of his eunuchs, on hearing of his death, ran away with a great portion of his wealth, and reached Samos, where a certain Samian seized the whole. I know the man's name well, but I shall willingly forget it here.

44. Of the greater part of Asia Darius was the discoverer. Wishing to know where the Indus (which is the only river save one² that produces crocodiles) emptied itself into the sea, he sent a number of men, on whose truthfulness he could rely, and among them Scylax of Caryanda,³ to sail down the river. They started from the city of Caspatyrus,⁴ in the region called Pacyica, and sailed down the stream in an easterly direction⁵ to the sea. Here they turned westward, and, after a voyage of thirty months, reached the place from which the Egyptian king, of whom I spoke above, sent the Phœnicians to sail round Libya.⁶ After this voyage was completed, Darius conquered the Indians,⁷ and made use of the sea in those parts. Thus all Asia, except the eastern portion, has been found to be similarly circumstanced with Libya.⁸

45. But the boundaries of Europe are quite unknown, and there is not a man who can say whether any sea girds it round either on the north⁹ or on the east, while in length it undoubtedly extends as far as both the other two. For my part I cannot conceive why three names, and women's names especially, should ever have been given to a tract which is in reality one, nor why

¹ The fate of Sir Walter Raleigh furnishes a curious parallel to this.

² That is, the Nile. Vide supra, ii. 67.

³ Caryanda was a place on or near the Carian coast.

⁴ Vide supra, iii. 102.

⁵ The real course of the Indus is somewhat *west* of south. The error of Herodotus arose perhaps from the Cabul river being mistaken for the true Indus.

⁶ Vide supra, ch. 42.

⁷ The conquest of the Indians, by which we are to understand the reduction of the Punjab, and perhaps (though this is not certain) of Scinde, preceded (as may be proved by the Inscriptions) the Scythian expedition.

⁸ Limited, that is, and circumscribed by fixed boundaries.

⁹ See Book iii. ch. 115, sub. fin.

the Egyptian Nile and the Colchian Phasis (or according to others the Mæotic Tanais and Cimmerian ferry) should have been fixed upon for the boundary lines;¹ nor can I even say who gave the three tracts their names, or whence they took the epithets. According to the Greeks in general, Libya was so called after a certain Libya, a native woman, and Asia after the wife of Prometheus. The Lydians, however, put in a claim to the latter name, which, they declare, was not derived from Asia the wife of Prometheus, but from Asies, the son of Cotys, and grandson of Manes, who also gave name to the tribe Asias at Sardis. As for Europe, no one can say whether it is surrounded by the sea or not, neither is it known whence the name of Europe was derived, nor who gave it name, unless we say that Europe was so called after the Tyrian Europé, and before her time was nameless, like the other divisions. But it is certain that Europé was an Asiatic, and never even set foot on the land which the Greeks now call Europe, only sailing from Phœnicia to Crete, and from Crete to Lycia. However let us quit these matters. We shall ourselves continue to use the names² which custom sanctions.

46. The Euxine sea, where Darius now went to war, has nations dwelling around it, with the one exception of the Scythians, more unpolished than those of any other region that we know of. For, setting aside Anacharsis³ and the Scythian people, there is not within this region a single nation which can be put forward as having any claims to wisdom, or which has produced a single person of any high repute. The Scythians indeed have in one respect, and that the very most important of all those that fall under man's control, shown themselves wiser than any nation upon the face of the earth. Their customs otherwise are not such as I admire.⁴ The one thing of which I speak, is the contrivance whereby they make it impossible for the enemy who invades them to escape destruction, while they themselves are entirely out of his reach, unless it please them to engage with him. Having neither cities nor forts, and carry-

¹ The earliest Greek geographers divided the world into two portions only, Europe and Asia, in the latter of which they included Libya.

² There are grounds for believing Europe and Asia to have originally signified "the west" and "the east" respectively. Both are Semitic terms, and probably passed to the Greeks from the Phœnicians.

³ Concerning Anacharsis, see below, ch. 76.

⁴ It was a fashion among the Greeks to praise the simplicity and honesty of the nomade races, who were less civilised than themselves. Herodotus intends to mark his dissent from such views.

ing their dwellings with them wherever they go; accustomed, moreover, one and all of them, to shoot from horseback; and living not by husbandry but on their cattle, their waggons the only houses that they possess,¹ how can they fail of being unconquerable, and unassailable even?

47. The nature of their country, and the rivers by which it is intersected, greatly favour this mode of resisting attacks. For the land is level, well watered, and abounding in pasture;² while the rivers which traverse it are almost equal in number to the canals of Egypt. Of these I shall only mention the most famous and such as are navigable to some distance from the sea. They are, the Ister, which has five mouths; the Tyras, the Hypanis, the Borysthenes, the Panticapes, the Hypacyris, the Gerrhus, and the Tanais. The courses of these streams I shall now proceed to describe.

48. The Ister is of all the rivers with which we are acquainted the mightiest. It never varies in height, but continues at the same level summer and winter. Counting from the west it is the first of the Scythian rivers, and the reason of its being the greatest is, that it receives the waters of several tributaries. Now the tributaries which swell its flood are the following: first, on the side of Scythia, these five—the stream called by the Scythians Porata, and by the Greeks Pyretus, the Tiarantus, the Ararus, the Naparis, and the Ordessus. The first mentioned is a great stream, and is the easternmost of the tributaries. The Tiarantus is of less volume, and more to the west. The Ararus, Naparis, and Ordessus fall into the Ister between these two. All the above mentioned are genuine Scythian rivers, and go to swell the current of the Ister.

49. From the country of the Agathyrsi comes down another river, the Maris, which empties itself into the same; and from the heights of Hæmus descend with a northern course three mighty streams, the Atlas, the Auras, and the Tibisis, and pour their waters into it. Thrace gives it three tributaries, the Athrys, the Noës, and the Artanes, which all pass through the country of the Crobyzian Thracians. Another tributary is

¹ It may be doubted whether the ancient Scythians really lived entirely in their waggons. More probably their waggons carried a tent, consisting of a light framework of wood covered with felt or matting, which could be readily transferred from the wheels to the ground, and *vice versa*.

² The pasture is now not good, excepting in the immediate vicinity of the rivers; otherwise the picture drawn of the country accords exactly with the accounts given by modern travellers.

furnished by Pæonia, namely, the Scius; this river, rising near Mount Rhodopé, forces its way through the chain of Hæmus,¹ and so reaches the Ister. From Illyria comes another stream, the Angrus, which has a course from south to north, and after watering the Triballian plain, falls into the Brongus, which falls into the Ister.² So the Ister is augmented by these two streams, both considerable. Besides all these, the Ister receives also the waters of the Carpis³ and the Alpis,⁴ two rivers running in a northerly direction from the country above the Umbrians. For the Ister flows through the whole extent of Europe, rising in the country of the Celts (the most westerly of all the nations of Europe, excepting the Cynetians), and thence running across the continent till it reaches Scythia, whereof it washes the flanks.

50. All these streams, then, and many others, add their waters to swell the flood of the Ister, which thus increased becomes the mightiest of rivers; for undoubtedly if we compare the stream of the Nile with the *single* stream of the Ister, we must give the preference to the Nile,⁵ of which no tributary river, nor even rivulet, augments the volume. The Ister remains at the same level both summer and winter—owing to the following reasons, as I believe. During the winter it runs at its natural height, or a very little higher, because in those countries there is scarcely any rain in winter, but constant snow. When summer comes, this snow, which is of great depth, begins to melt, and flows into the Ister, which is swelled at that season, not only by this cause but also by the rains, which are heavy and frequent at that part of the year. Thus the various streams which go to form the Ister are higher in summer than in winter, and just so much higher as the sun's power and attraction are greater; so that these two causes counteract each other, and

¹ This is untrue. No stream forces its way through this chain.

² The Angrus is either the western *Morava* or the *Ibar*, most probably the latter. The Brongus is the eastern or Bulgarian *Morava*. The Triballian plain is thus the modern Servia.

³ As Herodotus plunges deeper into the European continent, his knowledge is less exact. He knows the fact that the Danube receives two great tributaries from the south (the Drave and the Save) in the upper part of its course, but he does not any longer know the true direction of the streams.

⁴ It is interesting to find in Herodotus this first trace of the word *Alp*, by which, from the time of Polybius, the great European chain has been known.

⁵ The lengths of the two rivers are—of the Nile, 4000 miles; of the Danube, 1760 miles.

the effect is to produce a balance, whereby the Ister remains always at the same level.¹

51. This, then, is one of the great Scythian rivers; the next to it is the Tyras, which rises from a great lake separating Scythia from the land of the Neuri, and runs with a southerly course to the sea. Greeks dwell at the mouth of the river, who are called Tyritæ.

52. The third river is the Hypanis.² This stream rises within the limits of Scythia, and has its source in another vast lake, around which wild white horses graze. The lake is called, properly enough, the Mother of the Hypanis.³ The Hypanis, rising here, during the distance of five days' navigation is a shallow stream, and the water sweet and pure; thence, however, to the sea, which is a distance of four days, it is exceedingly bitter. This change is caused by its receiving into it at that point a brook the waters of which are so bitter that, although it is but a tiny rivulet, it nevertheless taints the entire Hypanis, which is a large stream among those of the second order. The source of this bitter spring is on the borders of the Scythian Husbandmen, where they adjoin upon the Alazonians; and the place where it rises is called in the Scythic tongue *Exampæus*, which means in our language, "The Sacred Ways." The spring itself bears the same name. The Tyras and the Hypanis approach each other in the country of the Alazonians,⁴ but afterwards separate, and leave a wide space between their streams.

53. The fourth of the Scythian rivers is the Borysthenes.⁵ Next to the Ister, it is the greatest of them all; and, in my judgment, it is the most productive river, not merely in Scythia, but in the whole world, excepting only the Nile, with which no stream can possibly compare. It has upon its banks the loveliest and most excellent pasturages for cattle; it contains abundance of the most delicious fish; its water is most pleasant to the taste;

¹ The "balance" of which Herodotus speaks is caused by the increased volume of the southern tributaries during the summer (which is caused by the melting of the snows along the range of the Alps), being just sufficient to compensate for the diminished volume of the northern tributaries, which in winter are swelled by the rains.

² The Hypanis is undoubtedly a main tributary of the Dnieper.

³ Compare below, ch. 86.

⁴ That is, between the 47th and 48th parallels. The fact here noticed by Herodotus strongly proves his actual knowledge of the geography of these countries.

⁵ The Borysthenes is the Dnieper.

its stream is limpid, while all the other rivers near it are muddy; the richest harvests spring up along its course, and where the ground is not sown, the heaviest crops of grass; while salt forms in great plenty about its mouth without human aid,¹ and large fish are taken in it of the sort called Antacæi, without any prickly bones, and good for pickling.² Nor are these the whole of its marvels. As far inland as the place named Gerrhus, which is distant forty days' voyage from the sea, its course is known, and its direction is from north to south; but above this no one has traced it, so as to say through what countries it flows. It enters the territory of the Scythian Husbandmen after running for some time across a desert region, and continues for ten days' navigation to pass through the land which they inhabit. It is the only river besides the Nile the sources of which are unknown to me, as they are also (I believe) to all the other Greeks. Not long before it reaches the sea, the Borysthenes is joined by the Hypanis, which pours its waters into the same lake. The land that lies between them, a narrow point like the beak of a ship, is called Cape Hippolaüs. Here is a temple dedicated to Ceres, and opposite the temple upon the Hypanis is the dwelling-place of the Borysthenites. But enough has been said of these streams.

54. Next in succession comes the fifth river, called the Panticapes, which has, like the Borysthenes, a course from north to south, and rises from a lake. The space between this river and the Borysthenes is occupied by the Scythians who are engaged in husbandry. After watering their country, the Panticapes flows through Hylæa, and empties itself into the Borysthenes.

55. The sixth stream is the Hypacyris, a river rising from a lake, and running directly through the middle of the Nomadic Scythians. It falls into the sea near the city of Carcinitis, leaving Hylæa and the course of Achilles³ to the right.

56. The seventh river is the Gerrhus, which is a branch thrown out by the Borysthenes at the point where the course of that stream first begins to be known, to wit, the region called by

¹ The salines of *Kinburn*, at the extremity of the promontory which forms the southern shore of the *liman* of the Dnieper, are still of the greatest importance to Russia, and supply vast tracts of the interior.

² The sturgeon of the Dnieper have to this day a great reputation.

³ This is the modern *Kosa Tendra* and *Kosa Djarilgatch*, a long and narrow strip of sandy beach extending about 80 miles from nearly opposite *Kalantchak* to a point about 12 miles south of the promontory of *Kinburn*, and attached to the continent only in the middle by an isthmus about 12 miles across.

the same name as the stream itself, viz. Gerrhus. This river on its passage towards the sea divides the country of the Nomadic from that of the Royal Scyths. It runs into the Hypacyris.

57. The eighth river is the Tanais, a stream which has its source, far up the country, in a lake of vast size,¹ and which empties itself into another still larger lake, the Palus Mæotis, whereby the country of the Royal Scythians is divided from that of the Sauromatæ. The Tanais receives the waters of a tributary stream, called the Hyrgis.²

58. Such then are the rivers of chief note in Scythia. The grass which the land produces is more apt to generate gall in the beasts that feed on it than any other grass which is known to us, as plainly appears on the opening of their carcasses.

59. Thus abundantly are the Scythians provided with the most important necessities. Their manners and customs come now to be described. They worship only the following gods, namely, Vesta, whom they reverence beyond all the rest, Jupiter, and Tellus, whom they consider to be the wife of Jupiter; and after these Apollo, Celestial Venus, Hercules, and Mars. These gods are worshipped by the whole nation: the Royal Scythians offer sacrifice likewise to Neptune. In the Scythic tongue Vesta is called *Tabiti*, Jupiter (very properly, in my judgment) *Papæus*, Tellus *Apia*, Apollo *Ætosyrus*, Celestial Venus *Artimpasa*, and Neptune *Thamimasadas*. They use no images, altars, or temples, except in the worship of Mars; but in his worship they do use them.

60. The manner of their sacrifices is everywhere and in every case the same; the victim stands with its two fore-feet bound together by a cord, and the person who is about to offer, taking his station behind the victim, gives the rope a pull, and thereby throws the animal down; as it falls he invokes the god to whom he is offering; after which he puts a noose round the animal's neck, and, inserting a small stick, twists it round, and so strangles him. No fire is lighted, there is no consecration, and no pouring out of drink-offerings; but directly that the beast is strangled the sacrificer flays him, and then sets to work to boil the flesh.

61. As Scythia, however, is utterly barren of firewood, a plan

¹ The Tanais (the modern *Don*) rises from a *small* lake, the lake of *Ivan-Ozero*, in lat. 54° 2', long. 38° 3'. The Volga flows in part from the *great* lake of Onega.

² Dean Blakesley regards it as the *Seviersky*, in which he finds "some vestige of the ancient title."

has had to be contrived for boiling the flesh, which is the following. After flaying the beasts, they take out all the bones, and (if they possess such gear) put the flesh into boilers made in the country, which are very like the cauldrons of the Lesbians, except that they are of a much larger size; then placing the bones of the animals beneath the cauldron, they set them alight, and so boil the meat.¹ If they do not happen to possess a cauldron, they make the animal's paunch hold the flesh, and pouring in at the same time a little water, lay the bones under and light them. The bones burn beautifully; and the paunch easily contains all the flesh when it is stript from the bones, so that by this plan your ox is made to boil himself, and other victims also to do the like. When the meat is all cooked, the sacrificer offers a portion of the flesh and of the entrails, by casting it on the ground before him. They sacrifice all sorts of cattle, but most commonly horses.²

62. Such are the victims offered to the other gods, and such is the mode in which they are sacrificed; but the rites paid to Mars are different. In every district, at the seat of government, there stands a temple of this god, whereof the following is a description. It is a pile of brushwood, made of a vast quantity of fagots, in length and breadth three furlongs; in height somewhat less,³ having a square platform upon the top, three sides of which are precipitous, while the fourth slopes so that men may walk up it. Each year a hundred and fifty waggon-loads of brushwood are added to the pile, which sinks continually by reason of the rains. An antique iron sword is planted on the top of every such mound, and serves as the image of Mars: yearly sacrifices of cattle and of horses are made to it, and more victims are offered thus than to all the rest of their gods. When prisoners are taken in war, out of every hundred men they sacrifice one, not however with the same rites as the cattle, but with different. Libations of wine are first poured upon their heads, after which they are slaughtered over a vessel; the vessel is then carried up to the top of the pile, and the blood poured upon the scymitar. While this takes place at the top of the mound, below, by the side of the temple, the right hands and

¹ It may be gathered from Ezekiel (xxiv. 5) that a similar custom prevailed among the Jews.

² Vide supra, ch. i. 216, where the same is related of the Massagetæ. Horses have always abounded in the steppes, and perhaps in ancient times were more common than any other animal.

³ These measures are utterly incredible.

arms of the slaughtered prisoners are cut off, and tossed on high into the air. Then the other victims are slain, and those who have offered the sacrifice depart, leaving the hands and arms where they may chance to have fallen, and the bodies also, separate.

63. Such are the observances of the Scythians with respect to sacrifice. They never use swine for the purpose, nor indeed is it their wont to breed them in any part of their country.

64. In what concerns war, their customs are the following. The Scythian soldier drinks the blood of the first man he overthrows in battle. Whatever number he slays, he cuts off all their heads, and carries them to the king; since he is thus entitled to a share of the booty, whereto he forfeits all claim if he does not produce a head. In order to strip the skull of its covering, he makes a cut round the head above the ears, and, laying hold of the scalp, shakes the skull out; then with the rib of an ox he scrapes the scalp clean of flesh, and softening it by rubbing between the hands, uses it thenceforth as a napkin. The Scyth is proud of these scalps, and hangs them from his bridle-rein; the greater the number of such napkins that a man can show, the more highly is he esteemed among them. Many make themselves cloaks, like the capotes of our peasants, by sewing a quantity of these scalps together. Others flay the right arms of their dead enemies, and make of the skin, which is stripped off with the nails hanging to it, a covering for their quivers. Now the skin of a man is thick and glossy, and would in whiteness surpass almost all other hides. Some even flay the entire body of their enemy, and stretching it upon a frame carry it about with them wherever they ride. Such are the Scythian customs with respect to scalps and skins.

65. The skulls of their enemies, not indeed of all, but of those whom they most detest, they treat as follows. Having sawn off the portion below the eyebrows, and cleaned out the inside, they cover the outside with leather. When a man is poor, this is all that he does; but if he is rich, he also lines the inside with gold: in either case the skull is used as a drinking-cup. They do the same with the skulls of their own kith and kin if they have been at feud with them, and have vanquished them in the presence of the king. When strangers whom they deem of any account come to visit them, these skulls are handed round, and the host tells how that these were his relations who made war upon him, and how that he got the better of them; all this being looked upon as proof of bravery,

66. Once a year the governor of each district, at a set place in his own province, mingles a bowl of wine, of which all Scythians have a right to drink by whom foes have been slain; while they who have slain no enemy are not allowed to taste of the bowl, but sit aloof in disgrace. No greater shame than this can happen to them. Such as have slain a very large number of foes, have two cups instead of one, and drink from both.

67. Scythia has an abundance of soothsayers, who foretell the future by means of a number of willow wands. A large bundle of these wands is brought and laid on the ground. The soothsayer unties the bundle, and places each wand by itself, at the same time uttering his prophecy: then, while he is still speaking, he gathers the rods together again, and makes them up once more into a bundle. This mode of divination is of home growth in Scythia.¹ The Enarees, or woman-like men, have another method, which they say Venus taught them. It is done with the inner bark of the linden-tree. They take a piece of this bark, and, splitting it into three strips, keep twining the strips about their fingers, and untwining them, while they prophesy.

68. Whenever the Scythian king falls sick, he sends for the three soothsayers of most renown at the time, who come and make trial of their art in the mode above described. Generally they say that the king is ill, because such or such a person, mentioning his name, has sworn falsely by the royal hearth. This is the usual oath among the Scythians, when they wish to swear with very great solemnity. Then the man accused of having forsworn himself is arrested and brought before the king. The soothsayers tell him that by their art it is clear he has sworn a false oath by the royal hearth, and so caused the illness of the king—he denies the charge, protests that he has sworn no false oath, and loudly complains of the wrong done to him. Upon this the king sends for six new soothsayers, who try the matter by soothsaying. If they too find the man guilty of the offence, straightway he is beheaded by those who first accused him, and his goods are parted among them: if, on the contrary, they acquit him, other soothsayers, and again others, are sent for, to try the case. Should the greater number decide in favour of the man's innocence, then they who first accused him forfeit their lives.

¹ It was not, however, confined to Scythia. There is distinct allusion to such a mode of divination in Hosea (ii. 12): "My people ask counsel of their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them."

69. The mode of their execution is the following: a waggon is loaded with brushwood, and oxen are harnessed to it;¹ the soothsayers, with their feet tied together, their hands bound behind their backs, and their mouths gagged, are thrust into the midst of the brushwood; finally the wood is set alight, and the oxen, being startled, are made to rush off with the waggon. It often happens that the oxen and the soothsayers are both consumed together, but sometimes the pole of the waggon is burnt through, and the oxen escape with a scorching. Diviners—lying diviners, they call them—are burnt in the way described, for other causes besides the one here spoken of. When the king puts one of them to death, he takes care not to let any of his sons survive: all the male offspring are slain with the father, only the females being allowed to live.

70. Oaths among the Scyths are accompanied with the following ceremonies: a large earthen bowl is filled with wine, and the parties to the oath, wounding themselves slightly with a knife or an awl, drop some of their blood into the wine; then they plunge into the mixture a scymitar, some arrows, a battle-axe, and a javelin, all the while repeating prayers; lastly the two contracting parties drink each a draught from the bowl, as do also the chief men among their followers.²

71. The tombs of their kings are in the land of the Gerrhi, who dwell at the point where the Borysthenes is first navigable. Here, when the king dies, they dig a grave, which is square in shape, and of great size. When it is ready, they take the king's corpse, and, having opened the belly, and cleaned out the inside, fill the cavity with a preparation of chopped cypress, frankincense, parsley-seed, and anise-seed, after which they sew up the opening, enclose the body in wax, and, placing it on a waggon, carry it about through all the different tribes. On this procession each tribe, when it receives the corpse, imitates the example which is first set by the Royal Scythians; every man chops off a piece of his ear, crops his hair close, and makes a cut all round his arm, lacerates his forehead and his nose, and thrusts an arrow through his left hand. Then they who have the care of the corpse carry it with them to another of the tribes which are

¹ We learn from this that the ancient Scythians, like the modern Calmucks and Nogais, used oxen and not horses to draw their waggons.

² Modified forms of same ceremony are ascribed to the Lydians and Assyrians by Herodotus (i. 74), and to the Armenians and Iberians by Tacitus (Ann. xii. 47). The Arab practice (iii. 8) is somewhat different. In Southern Africa a custom very like the Scythian prevails to this day.

under the Scythian rule, followed by those whom they first visited. On completing the circuit of all the tribes under their sway, they find themselves in the country of the Gerrhi, who are the most remote of all, and so they come to the tombs of the kings. There the body of the dead king is laid in the grave prepared for it, stretched upon a mattress; spears are fixed in the ground on either side of the corpse, and beams stretched across above it to form a roof, which is covered with a thatching of osier twigs. In the open space around the body of the king they bury one of his concubines, first killing her by strangling, and also his cup-bearer, his cook, his groom, his lacquey, his messenger, some of his horses, firstlings of all his other possessions, and some golden cups; for they use neither silver nor brass. After this they set to work, and raise a vast mound above the grave, all of them vying with each other and seeking to make it as tall as possible.

72. When a year is gone by, further ceremonies take place. Fifty of the best of the late king's attendants are taken, all native Scythians—for as bought slaves are unknown in the country, the Scythian kings choose any of their subjects that they like, to wait on them—fifty of these are taken and strangled, with fifty of the most beautiful horses. When they are dead, their bowels are taken out, and the cavity cleaned, filled full of chaff, and straightway sewn up again. This done, a number of posts are driven into the ground, in sets of two pairs each, and on every pair half the felly of a wheel is placed archwise; then strong stakes are run lengthways through the bodies of the horses from tail to neck, and they are mounted up upon the fellies, so that the felly in front supports the shoulders of the horse, while that behind sustains the belly and quarters, the legs dangling in mid-air; each horse is furnished with a bit and bridle, which latter is stretched out in front of the horse, and fastened to a peg.¹ The fifty strangled youths are then mounted severally on the fifty horses. To effect this, a second stake is passed through their bodies along the course of the spine to the neck; the lower end of which projects from the body, and is fixed into a socket, made in the stake that runs lengthwise down the horse. The fifty riders are thus ranged in a circle round the tomb, and so left.

73. Such, then, is the mode in which the kings are buried: as

¹ The practice of impaling horses seems to have ceased in these regions. It was found, however, among the Tatars so late as the fourteenth century.

for the people, when any one dies, his nearest of kin lay him upon a waggon and take him round to all his friends in succession: each receives them in turn and entertains them with a banquet, whereat the dead man is served with a portion of all that is set before the others; this is done for forty days, at the end of which time the burial takes place. After the burial, those engaged in it have to purify themselves, which they do in the following way. First they well soap and wash their heads; then, in order to cleanse their bodies, they act as follows: they make a booth by fixing in the ground three sticks inclined towards one another,¹ and stretching around them woollen felts, which they arrange so as to fit as close as possible: inside the booth a dish is placed upon the ground, into which they put a number of red-hot stones, and then add some hemp-seed.

74. Hemp grows in Scythia: it is very like flax; only that it is a much coarser and taller plant: some grows wild about the country, some is produced by cultivation:² the Thracians make garments of it which closely resemble linen; so much so, indeed, that if a person has never seen hemp he is sure to think they are linen, and if he has, unless he is very experienced in such matters, he will not know of which material they are.

75. The Scythians, as I said, take some of this hemp-seed, and, creeping under the felt coverings, throw it upon the red-hot stones; immediately it smokes, and gives out such a vapour as no Grecian vapour-bath can exceed; the Scyths, delighted, shout for joy, and this vapour serves them instead of a water-bath; for they never by any chance wash their bodies with water. Their women make a mixture of cypress, cedar, and frankincense wood, which they pound into a paste upon a rough piece of stone, adding a little water to it. With this substance, which is of a thick consistency, they plaster their faces all over, and indeed their whole bodies. A sweet odour is thereby imparted to them, and when they take off the plaster on the day following, their skin is clean and glossy.

76. The Scythians have an extreme hatred of all foreign customs, particularly of those in use among the Greeks, as the instances of Anacharsis, and, more lately, of Scylas, have fully shown. The former, after he had travelled over a great portion of the world, and displayed wherever he went many proofs of

¹ Here we see tent-making in its infancy. The tents of the wandering tribes of the steppes are now of a much more elaborate construction.

² Hemp is not now cultivated in these regions. It forms, however, an item of some importance among the exports of Southern Russia.

wisdom, as he sailed through the Hellespont on his return to Scythia touched at Cyzicus. There he found the inhabitants celebrating with much pomp and magnificence a festival to the Mother of the Gods,¹ and was himself induced to make a vow to the goddess, whereby he engaged, if he got back safe and sound to his home, that he would give her a festival and a night-procession in all respects like those which he had seen in Cyzicus. When, therefore, he arrived in Scythia, he betook himself to the district called the Woodland,² which lies opposite the Course of Achilles, and is covered with trees of all manner of different kinds, and there went through all the sacred rites with the tabour in his hand, and the images tied to him. While thus employed, he was noticed by one of the Scythians, who went and told king Saulius what he had seen. Then king Saulius came in person, and when he perceived what Anacharsis was about, he shot at him with an arrow and killed him. To this day, if you ask the Scyths about Anacharsis, they pretend ignorance of him, because of his Grecian travels and adoption of the customs of foreigners. I learnt, however, from Timnes, the steward of Ariapithes, that Anacharsis was paternal uncle to the Scythian king Idanthysus, being the son of Gnurus, who was the son of Lycus and the grandson of Spargapithes. If Anacharsis were really of this house, it must have been by his own brother that he was slain, for Idanthysus was a son of the Saulius who put Anacharsis to death.³

77. I have heard, however, another tale, very different from this, which is told by the Peloponnesians: they say, that Anacharsis was sent by the king of the Scyths to make acquaintance with Greece—that he went, and on his return home reported that the Greeks were all occupied in the pursuit of every kind of knowledge, except the Lacedæmonians; who, however, alone knew how to converse sensibly. A silly tale this, which the Greeks have invented for their amusement! There is no doubt that Anacharsis suffered death in the mode already related, on account of his attachment to foreign customs, and the intercourse which he held with the Greeks.

78. Scylas, likewise, the son of Ariapithes, many years later, met with almost the very same fate. Ariapithes, the Scythian

¹ Cybelé or Rhea, whose worship (common throughout Asia) passed from the Phrygians to the Ionian Greeks, and thence to their colonies.

² Vide supra, chs. 18, 19, and 54.

³ Herodotus is the earliest writer who mentions Anacharsis. There is no sufficient reason to doubt the fact of his travels.

king, had several sons, among them this Scylas, who was the child, not of a native Scyth, but of a woman of Istria.¹ Bred up by her, Scylas gained an acquaintance with the Greek language and letters. Some time afterwards, Ariapithes was treacherously slain by Spargapithes, king of the Agathyrsi; whereupon Scylas succeeded to the throne, and married one of his father's wives,² a woman named Opœa. This Opœa was a Scythian by birth, and had brought Ariapithes a son called Oricus. Now when Scylas found himself king of Scythia, as he disliked the Scythic mode of life, and was attached, by his bringing up, to the manners of the Greeks, he made it his usual practice, whenever he came with his army to the town of the Borysthenites, who, according to their own account, are colonists of the Milesians,—he made it his practice, I say, to leave the army before the city, and, having entered within the walls by himself, and carefully closed the gates, to exchange his Scythian dress for Grecian garments, and in this attire to walk about the forum, without guards or retinue. The Borysthenites kept watch at the gates, that no Scythian might see the king thus apparelled. Scylas, meanwhile, lived exactly as the Greeks, and even offered sacrifices to the Gods according to the Grecian rites. In this way he would pass a month, or more, with the Borysthenites, after which he would clothe himself again in his Scythian dress, and so take his departure. This he did repeatedly, and even built himself a house in Borysthenes, and married a wife there who was a native of the place.

79. But when the time came that was ordained to bring him woe, the occasion of his ruin was the following. He wanted to be initiated in the Bacchic mysteries, and was on the point of obtaining admission to the rites, when a most strange prodigy occurred to him. The house which he possessed, as I mentioned a short time back, in the city of the Borysthenites, a building of great extent and erected at a vast cost, round which there stood a number of sphinxes and griffins carved in white marble, was struck by lightning from on high, and burnt to the ground. Scylas, nevertheless, went on and received the initiation. Now the Scythians are wont to reproach the Greeks with their

¹ Istria, Ister, or Istropolis, at the mouth of the Danube or Ister, was a colony of the Milesians.

² Compare Adonijah's request to be given one of his father's (David's) wives (1 Kings ii. 17-25). Such marriages were forbidden by the Jewish law (Lev. xviii. 8, etc.), but they were no doubt common among other nations.

Bacchanal rage, and to say that it is not reasonable to imagine there is a god who impels men to madness. No sooner, therefore, was Scylas initiated in the Bacchic mysteries than one of the Borysthenites went and carried the news to the Scythians—"You Scyths laugh at us," he said, "because we rave when the god seizes us. But now our god has seized upon your king, who raves like us, and is maddened by the influence. If you think I do not tell you true, come with me, and I will show him to you." The chiefs of the Scythians went with the man accordingly, and the Borysthenite, conducting them into the city, placed them secretly on one of the towers. Presently Scylas passed by with the band of revellers, raving like the rest, and was seen by the watchers. Regarding the matter as a very great misfortune they instantly departed, and came and told the army what they had witnessed.

80. When, therefore, Scylas, after leaving Borysthenes, was about returning home, the Scythians broke out into revolt. They put at their head Octamasadas, grandson (on the mother's side) of Teres. Then Scylas, when he learned the danger with which he was threatened, and the reason of the disturbance, made his escape to Thrace. Octamasadas, discovering whither he had fled, marched after him, and had reached the Ister, when he was met by the forces of the Thracians. The two armies were about to engage, but before they joined battle, Sitalces¹ sent a message to Octamasadas to this effect—"Why should there be trial of arms betwixt thee and me? Thou art my own sister's son, and thou hast in thy keeping my brother. Surrender him into my hands, and I will give thy Scylas back to thee. So neither thou nor I will risk our armies." Sitalces sent this message to Octamasadas, by a herald, and Octamasadas, with whom a brother of Sitalces² had formerly taken refuge, accepted the terms. He surrendered his own uncle to Sitalces, and obtained in exchange his brother Scylas. Sitalces took his brother with him and withdrew; but Octamasadas beheaded Scylas upon the spot. Thus rigidly do the Scythians maintain their own customs, and thus severely do they punish such as adopt foreign usages.

81. What the population of Scythia is, I was not able to learn with certainty; the accounts which I received varied from one another. I heard from some that they were very numerous

¹ Vide infra, vii. 137. Sitalces was contemporary with Herodotus. He died B.C. 424 (Thucyd. iv. 101).

² Perhaps Sparadocus, the father of Seuthes.

indeed; others made their numbers but scanty for such a nation as the Scyths. Thus much, however, I witnessed with my own eyes. There is a tract called Exampæus between the Borysthenes and the Hypanis. I made some mention of it in a former place, where I spoke of the bitter stream which rising there flows into the Hypanis, and renders the water of that river undrinkable.¹ Here then stands a brazen bowl, six times as big as that at the entrance of the Euxine, which Pausanias, the son of Cleombrotus, set up. Such as have never seen that vessel may understand me better if I say that the Scythian bowl holds with ease six hundred amphoræ,² and is of the thickness of six fingers' breadth. The natives gave me the following account of the manner in which it was made. One of their kings, by name Ariantas, wishing to know the number of his subjects, ordered them all to bring him, on pain of death, the point off one of their arrows. They obeyed; and he collected thereby a vast heap of arrow-heads, which he resolved to form into a memorial that might go down to posterity. Accordingly he made of them this bowl, and dedicated it at Exampæus. This was all that I could learn concerning the number of the Scythians.

82. The country has no marvels except its rivers, which are larger and more numerous than those of any other land. These, and the vastness of the great plain, are worthy of note, and one thing besides, which I am about to mention. They show a foot-mark of Hercules, impressed on a rock, in shape like the print of a man's foot, but two cubits in length. It is in the neighbourhood of the Tyras. Having described this, I return to the subject on which I originally proposed to discourse.

83. The preparations of Darius against the Scythians had begun, messengers had been despatched on all sides with the king's commands, some being required to furnish troops, others to supply ships, others again to bridge the Thracian Bosphorus, when Artabanus, son of Hystaspes and brother of Darius, entreated the king to desist from his expedition, urging on him the great difficulty of attacking Scythia.³ Good, however, as the advice of Artabanus was, it failed to persuade Darius. He therefore ceased his reasonings; and Darius, when his preparations were complete, led his army forth from Susa.

¹ Vide supra, ch. 52.

² The Greek *amphora* (ἀμφορεύς) contained nearly nine of our gallons; whence it appears that this bowl would have held about 5400 gallons, or above 85 hogsheads. (The "Great Tun" at Heidelberg holds above 800 hogsheads.)

³ The cautious temper of Artabanus again appears, vii. 10.

84. It was then that a certain Persian, by name *Œobazus*, the father of three sons, all of whom were to accompany the army, came and prayed the king that he would allow one of his sons to remain with him. Darius made answer, as if he regarded him in the light of a friend who had urged a moderate request, "that he would allow them all to remain." *Œobazus* was overjoyed, expecting that all his children would be excused from serving; the king however bade his attendants take the three sons of *Œobazus* and forthwith put them to death. Thus they were all left behind, but not till they had been deprived of life.¹

85. When Darius, on his march from Susa, reached the territory of *Chalcedon*² on the shores of the *Bosphorus*, where the bridge had been made, he took ship and sailed thence to the *Cyanean islands*,³ which, according to the Greeks, once floated. He took his seat also in the temple⁴ and surveyed the *Pontus*, which is indeed well worthy of consideration. There is not in the world any other sea so wonderful: it extends in length eleven thousand one hundred furlongs, and its breadth, at the widest part, is three thousand three hundred.⁵ The mouth is but four furlongs wide; and this strait, called the *Bosphorus*, and across which the bridge of Darius had been thrown, is a hundred and twenty furlongs in length, reaching from the *Euxine* to the *Propontis*. The *Propontis* is five hundred furlongs across, and fourteen hundred long.⁶ Its waters flow into the *Hellespont*, the length of which is four hundred furlongs, and the width no more than seven.⁷ The *Hellespont* opens into the wide sea called the *Ægean*.

86. The mode in which these distances have been measured is the following. In a long day a vessel generally accomplishes about seventy thousand fathoms, in the night sixty thousand. Now from the mouth of the *Pontus* to the river *Phasis*, which is the extreme length of this sea, is a voyage of nine days and

¹ Compare the similar story told of *Xerxes*, *infra*, vii. 39.

² *Chalcedon* was situated on the Asiatic side, at the point where the *Bosphorus* opens into the Sea of *Marmora*.

³ Otherwise called the *Symplegades* [which, in Greek myth, crushed all vessels that tried to pass between them. Milton speaks of these "justling rocks," in reference to the story of *Jason* and the *Argonauts* (*P. L.* ii. 1017, 8).—*E. H. B.*].

⁴ The temple at the mouth of the strait mentioned below, ch. 87.

⁵ These measurements are extremely incorrect.

⁶ By the length of the *Propontis* we must understand here the distance from the lower mouth of the *Bosphorus* to the upper end of the *Hellespont*.

⁷ The length of the *Dardanelles* is, as nearly as possible, 40 miles. Its breadth at the narrowest part is about one mile.

eight nights, which makes the distance one million one hundred and ten thousand fathoms, or eleven thousand one hundred furlongs. Again, from Sindica, to Themiscyra on the river Thermôdon, where the Pontus is wider than at any other place,¹ is a sail of three days and two nights; which makes three hundred and thirty thousand fathoms, or three thousand three hundred furlongs. Such is the plan on which I have measured the Pontus, the Bosphorus, and the Hellespont, and such is the account which I have to give of them. The Pontus has also a lake belonging to it, not very much inferior to itself in size. The waters of this lake run into the Pontus: it is called the Mæotis, and also the Mother of the Pontus.

87. Darius, after he had finished his survey, sailed back to the bridge, which had been constructed for him by Mandrocles a Samian. He likewise surveyed the Bosphorus, and erected upon its shores two pillars of white marble, whereupon he inscribed the names of all the nations which formed his army—on the one pillar in Greek, on the other in Assyrian characters.² Now his army was drawn from all the nations under his sway; and the whole amount, without reckoning the naval forces, was seven hundred thousand men, including cavalry. The fleet consisted of six hundred ships. Some time afterwards the Byzantines removed these pillars to their own city, and used them for an altar which they erected to Orthosian Diana.³ One block remained behind: it lay near the temple of Bacchus at Byzantium, and was covered with Assyrian writing. The spot where Darius bridged the Bosphorus was, I think, but I speak only from conjecture, half-way between the city of Byzantium and the temple at the mouth of the strait.

88. Darius was so pleased with the bridge thrown across the strait by the Samian Mandrocles, that he not only bestowed upon him all the customary presents, but gave him ten of every kind. Mandrocles, by way of offering firstfruits from these presents, caused a picture to be painted which showed the whole of the bridge, with King Darius sitting in a seat of honour, and his army engaged in the passage. This painting he dedicated

¹ This is a mistake. It is possible that the Palus Mæotis (= Sea of Azov) may have been very greatly larger in the time of Herodotus than it is at present. [See Tozer, *History of Ancient Geography*, p. 81.—E. H. B.]

² It was natural that the Persians, who set up trilingual inscriptions in the central provinces for the benefit of their Arian, Semitic, and Tatar populations, should leave bilingual records in other places.

³ That is, Diana, who had established or *preserved* their city. (Compare the Latin "*Jupiter Stator*.")

in the temple of Juno at Samos, attaching to it the inscription following:—

“ The fish-fraught Bosphorus bridged, to Juno’s fane
Did Mandrocles this proud memorial bring;
When for himself a crown he’d skill to gain,
For Samos praise, contenting the Great King.”

Such was the memorial of his work which was left by the architect of the bridge.

89. Darius, after rewarding Mandrocles, passed into Europe, while he ordered the Ionians to enter the Pontus, and sail to the mouth of the Ister. There he bade them throw a bridge across the stream and await his coming. The Ionians, Æolians, and Hellespontians were the nations which furnished the chief strength of his navy. So the fleet, threading the Cyanean Isles, proceeded straight to the Ister, and, mounting the river to the point where its channels separate,¹ a distance of two days’ voyage from the sea, yoked the neck of the stream. Meantime Darius, who had crossed the Bosphorus by the bridge over it, marched through Thrace; and happening upon the sources of the Tearus, pitched his camp and made a stay of three days.

90. Now the Tearus is said by those who dwell near it, to be the most healthful of all streams, and to cure, among other diseases, the scab either in man or beast. Its sources, which are eight and thirty in number, all flowing from the same rock, are in part cold, in part hot. They lie at an equal distance from the town of Heræum near Perinthus,² and Apollonia on the Euxine, a two days’ journey from each. This river, the Tearus, is a tributary of the Contadesdus, which runs into the Agrianes, and that into the Hebrus.³ The Hebrus empties itself into the sea near the city of Ænus.⁴

91. Here then, on the banks of the Tearus, Darius stopped and pitched his camp. The river charmed him so, that he caused a pillar to be erected in this place also, with an inscription to the following effect: “ The fountains of the Tearus afford the

¹ The Danube divides at present near *Isatcha*, between *Brailow* and *Ismail*; but we cannot be certain that the division was always at this place.

² Perinthus (afterwards *Heraclea*) lay upon the Propontis, in lat. 41°, long. 28°, nearly. Its site is marked by the modern *Erekli* (vide infra, v. 1).

³ The Agrianes is undoubtedly the modern *Erkene*, which runs into the *Maritza* (Hebrus) to the north of the range of *Rhodope* (*Despoto Dagh*). The Contadesdus is the river of *Karishtiran*.

⁴ Concerning the site of Ænus, vide infra, vii. 58.

best and most beautiful water of all rivers: they were visited, on his march into Scythia, by the best and most beautiful of men, Darius, son of Hystaspes, king of the Persians, and of the whole continent.”¹ Such was the inscription which he set up at this place.

92. Marching thence, he came to a second river, called the Artiscus, which flows through the country of the Odrysians.² Here he fixed upon a certain spot, where every one of his soldiers should throw a stone as he passed by. When his orders were obeyed, Darius continued his march, leaving behind him great hills formed of the stones cast by his troops.

93. Before arriving at the Ister,³ the first people whom he subdued were the Getæ,⁴ who believe in their immortality. The Thracians of Salmydessus, and those who dwelt above the cities of Apollonia and Mesembria—the Scyrmiadæ and Nipsæans, as they are called—gave themselves up to Darius without a struggle; but the Getæ obstinately defending themselves, were forthwith enslaved, notwithstanding that they are the noblest as well as the most just of all the Thracian tribes.

94. The belief of the Getæ in respect of immortality is the following. They think that they do not really die, but that when they depart this life they go to Zalmoxis, who is called also Gebeleizis by some among them. To this god every five years they send a messenger, who is chosen by lot out of the whole nation, and charged to bear him their several requests. Their mode of sending him is this. A number of them stand in order, each holding in his hand three darts; others take the man who is to be sent to Zalmoxis, and swinging him by his hands and feet, toss him into the air so that he falls upon the points of the weapons. If he is pierced and dies, they think that the god is propitious to them; but if not, they lay the fault on the messenger, who (they say) is a wicked man: and so they choose another to send away. The messages are given while the man is still alive. This same people, when it lightens and thunders, aim their arrows at the sky, uttering threats against the god;⁵ and they do not believe that there is any god but their own.

¹ Vide supra, i. 4.

² The country of the Odrysæ was the great plain in the centre of which now stands the city of Adrianople.

³ It is not quite clear by which route Darius crossed the Balkan.

⁴ The identity of the Getæ with the Goths of later times is more than a plausible conjecture.

⁵ Compare the customs of the Calyndians (i. 172), and the Psylli (iv. 173).

95. I am told by the Greeks who dwell on the shores of the Hellespont and the Pontus, that this Zalmoxis was in reality a man, that he lived at Samos, and while there was the slave¹ of Pythagoras son of Mnesarchus. After obtaining his freedom he grew rich, and leaving Samos, returned to his own country. The Thracians at that time lived in a wretched way, and were a poor ignorant race; Zalmoxis, therefore, who by his commerce with the Greeks, and especially with one who was by no means their most contemptible philosopher, Pythagoras to wit, was acquainted with the Ionic mode of life and with manners more refined than those current among his countrymen, had a chamber built, in which from time to time he received and feasted all the principal Thracians, using the occasion to teach them that neither he, nor they, his boon companions, nor any of their posterity would ever perish, but that they would all go to a place where they would live for aye in the enjoyment of every conceivable good. While he was acting in this way, and holding this kind of discourse, he was constructing an apartment underground, into which, when it was completed, he withdrew, vanishing suddenly from the eyes of the Thracians, who greatly regretted his loss, and mourned over him as one dead. He meanwhile abode in his secret chamber three full years, after which he came forth from his concealment, and showed himself once more to his countrymen, who were thus brought to believe in the truth of what he had taught them. Such is the account of the Greeks.

96. I for my part neither put entire faith in this story of Zalmoxis and his underground chamber, nor do I altogether discredit it: but I believe Zalmoxis to have lived long before the time of Pythagoras. Whether there was ever really a man of the name, or whether Zalmoxis is nothing but a native god of the Getæ, I now bid him farewell. As for the Getæ themselves, the people who observe the practices described above, they were now reduced by the Persians, and accompanied the army of Darius.

97. When Darius, with his land forces, reached the Ister, he made his troops cross the stream, and after all were gone over gave orders to the Ionians to break the bridge, and follow him with the whole naval force in his land march. They were about to obey his command, when the general of the Mytilenæans, Coës son of Erxander, having first asked whether it was

¹ Thracian slaves were very numerous in Greece.

agreeable to the king to listen to one who wished to speak his mind, addressed him in the words following:—"Thou art about, Sire, to attack a country no part of which is cultivated, and wherein there is not a single inhabited city. Keep this bridge, then, as it is, and leave those who built it to watch over it. So if we come up with the Scythians and succeed against them as we could wish, we may return by this route; or if we fail of finding them, our retreat will still be secure. For I have no fear lest the Scythians defeat us in battle, but my dread is lest we be unable to discover them, and suffer loss while we wander about their territory. And now, mayhap, it will be said, I advise thee thus in the hope of being myself allowed to remain behind; but in truth I have no other design than to recommend the course which seems to me the best; nor will I consent to be among those left behind, but my resolve is, in any case, to follow thee." The advice of Coës pleased Darius highly, who thus replied to him:—"Dear Lesbian, when I am safe home again in my palace, be sure thou come to me, and with good deeds will I recompense thy good words of to-day."

98. Having so said, the king took a leathern thong, and tying sixty knots in it, called together the Ionian tyrants, and spoke thus to them:—"Men of Ionia, my former commands to you concerning the bridge are now withdrawn. See, here is a thong: take it, and observe my bidding with respect to it. From the time that I leave you to march forward into Scythia, untie every day one of the knots. If I do not return before the last day to which the knots will hold out, then leave your station, and sail to your several homes. Meanwhile, understand that my resolve is changed, and that you are to guard the bridge with all care, and watch over its safety and preservation. By so doing ye will oblige me greatly." When Darius had thus spoken, he set out on his march with all speed.

99. Before you come to Scythia, on the sea coast, lies Thrace. The land here makes a sweep, and then Scythia begins, the Ister falling into the sea at this point with its mouth facing the east. Starting from the Ister I shall now describe the measurements of the sea-shore of Scythia. Immediately that the Ister is crossed, Old Scythia begins, and continues as far as the city called Carcinitis, fronting towards the south wind and the mid-day. Here upon the same sea, there lies a mountainous tract ¹

¹ The mountains lie only along the southern coast of the Crimea. All the rest of the peninsula belongs to the steppes.

projecting into the Pontus, which is inhabited by the Tauri, as far as what is called the Rugged Chersonese,¹ which runs out into the sea upon the east. For the boundaries of Scythia extend on two sides to two different seas, one upon the south, and the other towards the east, as is also the case with Attica. And the Tauri occupy a position in Scythia like that which a people would hold in Attica, who, being foreigners and not Athenians, should inhabit the high land of Sunium, from Thoricus to the township of Anaphlystus, if this tract projected into the sea somewhat further than it does. Such, to compare great things with small, is the Tauric territory. For the sake of those who may not have made the voyage round these parts of Attica, I will illustrate in another way. It is as if in Iapygia a line were drawn from Port Brundusium² to Tarentum, and a people different from the Iapygians inhabited the promontory. These two instances may suggest a number of others where the shape of the land closely resembles that of Taurica.

100. Beyond this tract, we find the Scythians again in possession of the country above the Tauri and the parts bordering on the eastern sea, as also of the whole district lying west of the Cimmerian Bosphorus and the Palus Mæotis, as far as the river Tanais, which empties itself into that lake at its upper end. As for the inland boundaries of Scythia, if we start from the Ister, we find it enclosed by the following tribes, first the Agathyrsi, next the Neuri, then the Androphagi, and last of all, the Melanchlæni.

101. Scythia then, which is square in shape, and has two of its sides reaching down to the sea, extends inland to the same distance that it stretches along the coast, and is equal every way. For it is a ten days' journey from the Ister³ to the Borysthenes, and ten more from the Borysthenes to the Palus Mæotis, while the distance from the coast inland to the country of the Melanchlæni, who dwell above Scythia, is a journey of twenty days. I reckon the day's journey at two hundred furlongs. Thus the two sides which run straight inland are four thousand furlongs each, and the transverse sides at right angles to these are also of the same length, which gives the full size of Scythia.

102. The Scythians, reflecting on their situation, perceived that they were not strong enough by themselves to contend

¹ By the "rough" or "rugged" Chersonese, Herodotus plainly intends the eastern part of the Crimea.

² Brindisi.

³ [See Macan's *Herodotus*, vol. ii. p. 32.—E. H. B.]

with the army of Darius in open fight. They, therefore, sent envoys to the neighbouring nations, whose kings had already met, and were in consultation upon the advance of so vast a host. Now they who had come together were the kings of the Tauri, the Agathyrsi, the Neuri, the Androphagi, the Melanchlæni, the Gelôni, the Budini, and the Sauromatæ.

103. The Tauri have the following customs. They offer in sacrifice to the Virgin all shipwrecked persons, and all Greeks compelled to put into their ports by stress of weather. The mode of sacrifice is this. After the preparatory ceremonies, they strike the victim on the head with a club. Then, according to some accounts, they hurl the trunk from the precipice whereon the temple stands, and nail the head to a cross. Others grant that the head is treated in this way, but deny that the body is thrown down the cliff—on the contrary, they say, it is buried. The goddess to whom these sacrifices are offered the Tauri themselves declare to be Iphigenia¹ the daughter of Agamemnon. When they take prisoners in war they treat them in the following way. The man who has taken a captive cuts off his head, and carrying it to his home, fixes it upon a tall pole, which he elevates above his house, most commonly over the chimney. The reason that the heads are set up so high, is (it is said) in order that the whole house may be under their protection. These people live entirely by war and plundering.

104. The Agathyrsi are a race of men very luxurious, and very fond of wearing gold on their persons. They have wives in common, that so they may be all brothers,² and, as members of one family, may neither envy nor hate one another. In other respects their customs approach nearly to those of the Thracians.

105. The Neurian customs are like the Scythian. One generation before the attack of Darius they were driven from their land by a huge multitude of serpents which invaded them. Of these some were produced in their own country, while others, and those by far the greater number, came in from the deserts on the north. Suffering grievously beneath this scourge, they quitted their homes, and took refuge with the Budini. It seems

¹ The virgin goddess of the Tauri was more generally identified by the Greeks with their own Artemis. The legend of Iphigenia is probably a mere Greek fancy, having the Tauric custom of offering human sacrifices as its basis.

² This anticipation of the theory of Plato (*Rep.* v.) is curious. Was Plato indebted to Herodotus?

that these people are conjurers: for both the Scythians and the Greeks who dwell in Scythia say, that every Neurian once a year becomes a wolf¹ for a few days, at the end of which time he is restored to his proper shape.² Not that I believe this, but they constantly affirm it to be true, and are even ready to back their assertion with an oath.

106. The manners of the Androphagi³ are more savage than those of any other race. They neither observe justice, nor are governed by any laws. They are nomads, and their dress is Scythian; but the language which they speak is peculiar to themselves. Unlike any other nation in these parts, they are cannibals.

107. The Melanchlæni⁴ wear, all of them, black cloaks, and from this derive the name which they bear. Their customs are Scythic.

108. The Budini are a large and powerful nation: they have all deep blue eyes, and bright red hair. There is a city in their territory, called Gelônus, which is surrounded with a lofty wall, thirty furlongs each way, built entirely of wood. All the houses in the place and all the temples are of the same material. Here are temples built in honour of the Grecian gods, and adorned after the Greek fashion with images, altars, and shrines, all in wood. There is even a festival, held every third year in honour of Bacchus, at which the natives fall into the Bacchic fury. For the fact is that the Gelôni were anciently Greeks, who, being driven out of the factories along the coast, fled to the Budini and took up their abode with them. They still speak a language half Greek, half Scythian.

109. The Budini, however, do not speak the same language as the Gelôni, nor is their mode of life the same. They are the aboriginal people of the country, and are nomads; unlike any of the neighbouring races, they eat lice. The Gelôni, on the contrary, are tillers of the soil, eat bread, have gardens, and both in shape and complexion are quite different from the Budini. The Greeks notwithstanding call these latter Gelôni; but it is a mistake to give them the name. Their country is thickly planted with trees of all manner of kinds. In the very woodiest part is a broad deep lake, surrounded by marshy ground

¹ The story recalls the loup-garou of France. [The were-wolf constantly appears in modern folk-lore.—E. H. B.]

² As Herodotus recedes from the sea his accounts become more mythic, and less trustworthy.

³ Or "Men-eaters."

⁴ Or "Black-cloaks." This is probably a translation of the native name.

with reeds growing on it. Here otters are caught, and beavers, with another sort of animal which has a square face. With the skins of this last the natives border their capotes:¹ and they also get from them a remedy, which is of virtue in diseases of the womb.

110. It is reported of the Sauromatæ, that when the Greeks fought with the Amazons,² whom the Scythians call *Oior-pata* or “man-slayers,” as it may be rendered, *Oior* being Scythic for “man,” and *pata* for “to slay”—it is reported, I say, that the Greeks after gaining the battle of the Thermôdon, put to sea, taking with them on board three of their vessels all the Amazons whom they had made prisoners; and that these women upon the voyage rose up against the crews, and massacred them to a man. As however they were quite strange to ships, and did not know how to use either rudder, sails, or oars, they were carried, after the death of the men, where the winds and the waves listed. At last they reached the shores of the Palus Mæotis and came to a place called Cremni or “the Cliffs,” which is in the country of the free Scythians. Here they went ashore, and proceeded by land towards the inhabited regions; the first herd of horses which they fell in with they seized, and mounting upon their backs, fell to plundering the Scythian territory.

111. The Scyths could not tell what to make of the attack upon them—the dress, the language, the nation itself, were alike unknown—whence the enemy had come even, was a marvel. Imagining, however, that they were all men of about the same age,³ they went out against them, and fought a battle. Some of the bodies of the slain fell into their hands, whereby they discovered the truth. Hereupon they deliberated, and made a resolve to kill no more of them, but to send against them a detachment of their youngest men, as near as they could guess equal to the women in number, with orders to encamp in their neighbourhood, and do as they saw them do—when the Amazons advanced against them, they were to retire, and avoid a fight—when they halted, the young men were to approach and pitch their camp near the camp of the enemy. All this they did on account of their strong desire to obtain children from so notable a race.

¹ A border of fur is commonly seen to edge the coat worn by the Scythians on the sepulchral vases and other remains.

² Some Amazons were supposed to live in Asia, others in Africa.

³ That is to say, as they were all alike beardless, they took them for an army of youths.

112. So the youths departed, and obeyed the orders which had been given them. The Amazons soon found out that they had not come to do them any harm; and so they on their part ceased to offer the Scythians any molestation. And now day after day the camps approached nearer to one another; both parties led the same life, neither having anything but their arms and horses, so that they were forced to support themselves by hunting and pillage.

113. At last an incident brought two of them together—the man easily gained the good graces of the woman, who bade him by signs (for they did not understand each other's language) to bring a friend the next day to the spot where they had met—promising on her part to bring with her another woman. He did so, and the woman kept her word. When the rest of the youths heard what had taken place, they also sought and gained the favour of the other Amazons.

114. The two camps were then joined in one, the Scythians living with the Amazons as their wives; and the men were unable to learn the tongue of the women, but the women soon caught up the tongue of the men. When they could thus understand one another, the Scyths addressed the Amazons in these words,—“We have parents, and properties, let us therefore give up this mode of life, and return to our nation, and live with them. You shall be our wives there no less than here, and we promise you to have no others.” But the Amazons said—“We could not live with your women—our customs are quite different from theirs. To draw the bow, to hurl the javelin, to bestride the horse, these are our arts—of womanly employments we know nothing. Your women, on the contrary, do none of these things; but stay at home in their waggons, engaged in womanish tasks, and never go out to hunt, or to do anything. We should never agree together. But if you truly wish to keep us as your wives, and would conduct yourselves with strict justice towards us, go you home to your parents, bid them give you your inheritance, and then come back to us, and let us and you live together by ourselves.”

115. The youths approved of the advice, and followed it. They went and got the portion of goods which fell to them, returned with it, and rejoined their wives, who then addressed them in these words following:—“We are ashamed, and afraid to live in the country where we now are. Not only have we stolen you from your fathers, but we have done great damage to

Scythia by our ravages. As you like us for wives, grant the request we make of you. Let us leave this country together, and go and dwell beyond the Tanais." Again the youths complied.

116. Crossing the Tanais they journeyed eastward a distance of three days' march from that stream, and again northward a distance of three days' march from the Palus Mæotis. Here they came to the country where they now live, and took up their abode in it. The women of the Sauromatæ have continued from that day to the present to observe their ancient customs,¹ frequently hunting on horseback with their husbands, sometimes even unaccompanied; in war taking the field; and wearing the very same dress as the men.

117. The Sauromatæ speak the language of Scythia, but have never talked it correctly, because the Amazons learnt it imperfectly at the first. Their marriage-law lays it down that no girl shall wed till she has killed a man in battle. Sometimes it happens that a woman dies unmarried at an advanced age, having never been able in her whole lifetime to fulfil the condition.

118. The envoys of the Scythians, on being introduced into the presence of the kings of these nations, who were assembled to deliberate, made it known to them, that the Persian, after subduing the whole of the other continent, had thrown a bridge over the strait of the Bosphorus, and crossed into the continent of Europe, where he had reduced the Thracians, and was now making a bridge over the Ister, his aim being to bring under his sway all Europe also. "Stand ye not aloof then from this contest," they went on to say, "look not on tamely while we are perishing—but make common cause with us, and together let us meet the enemy. If ye refuse, we must yield to the pressure, and either quit our country, or make terms with the invaders. For what else is left for us to do, if your aid be withheld from us? The blow, be sure, will not light on you more gently upon this account. The Persian comes against you no less than against us: and will not be content, after we are conquered, to leave you in peace. We can bring strong proof of what we here advance. Had the Persian leader indeed come to avenge the wrongs which he suffered at our hands when we enslaved his people, and to war on us only, he would have been

¹ This is of course the origin of the myth narrated above. That the Sarmatian women had these habits seems to be a certain fact.

bound to march straight upon Scythia, without molesting any nation by the way.¹ Then it would have been plain to all that Scythia alone was aimed at. But now, what has his conduct been? From the moment of his entrance into Europe, he has subjugated without exception every nation that lay in his path. All the tribes of the Thracians have been brought under his sway, and among them even our next neighbours, the Getæ."

119. The assembled princes of the nations, after hearing all that the Scythians had to say, deliberated. At the end opinion was divided—the kings of the Gelôni, Budini, and Sauromatæ were of accord, and pledged themselves to give assistance to the Scythians; but the Agathyrsian and Neurian princes, together with the sovereigns of the Androphagi, the Melanchlæni, and the Tauri, replied to their request as follows:—"If you had not been the first to wrong the Persians, and begin the war, we should have thought the request you make just; we should then have complied with your wishes, and joined our arms with yours. Now, however, the case stands thus—you, independently of us, invaded the land of the Persians, and so long as God gave you the power, lorded it over them: raised up now by the same God, they are come to do to you the like. We, on our part, did no wrong to these men in the former war, and will not be the first to commit wrong now. If they invade our land, and begin aggressions upon us, we will not suffer them; but, till we see this come to pass, we will remain at home. For we believe that the Persians are not come to attack us, but to punish those who are guilty of first injuring them."

120. When this reply reached the Scythians, they resolved, as the neighbouring nations refused their alliance, that they would not openly venture on any pitched battle with the enemy, but would retire before them, driving off their herds, choking up all the wells and springs as they retreated, and leaving the whole country bare of forage. They divided themselves into three bands, one of which, namely that commanded by Scopasis, it was agreed should be joined by the Sauromatæ, and if the Persians advanced in the direction of the Tanais, should retreat along the shores of the Palus Mæotis and make for that river; while if the Persians retired, they should at once pursue and harass them. The two other divisions, the principal one under

¹ Alluding to the Scythian invasion of Asia in the time of Cyaxares. See Book i. chs. 103-105, and *supra*, ch. 1.

the command of Idanthyrus, and the third, of which Taxacis was king, were to unite in one, and, joined by the detachments of the Gelôni and Budini, were, like the others, to keep at the distance of a day's march from the Persians, falling back as they advanced, and doing the same as the others. And first, they were to take the direction of the nations which had refused to join the alliance, and were to draw the war upon them: that so, if they would not of their own free will engage in the contest, they might by these means be forced into it. Afterwards, it was agreed that they should retire into their own land, and, should it on deliberation appear to them expedient, join battle with the enemy.

121. When these measures had been determined on, the Scythians went out to meet the army of Darius, sending on in front as scouts the fleetest of their horsemen. Their waggons, wherein their women and their children lived, and all their cattle, except such a number as was wanted for food, which they kept with them, were made to precede them in their retreat, and departed, with orders to keep marching, without change of course, to the north.

122. The scouts of the Scythians found the Persian host advanced three days' march from the Ister, and immediately took the lead of them at the distance of a day's march, encamping from time to time, and destroying all that grew on the ground. The Persians no sooner caught sight of the Scythian horse than they pursued upon their track, while the enemy retired before them. The pursuit of the Persians was directed towards the single division of the Scythian army,¹ and thus their line of march was eastward toward the Tanais. The Scyths crossed the river, and the Persians after them, still in pursuit. In this way they passed through the country of the Sauromatæ, and entered that of the Budini.

123. As long as the march of the Persian army lay through the countries of the Scythians and Sauromatæ, there was nothing which they could damage, the land being waste and barren; but on entering the territories of the Budini, they came upon the wooden fortress above mentioned,² which was deserted by its inhabitants and left quite empty of everything. This place they burnt to the ground; and having so done, again pressed forward on the track of the retreating Scythians, till, having passed

¹ The division of Scopasis (supra, ch. 120).

² That is, the town Gelônus. Vide supra, ch. 108.

through the entire country of the Budini, they reached the desert, which has no inhabitants,¹ and extends a distance of seven days' journey above the Budinian territory. Beyond this desert dwell the Thyssagetæ, out of whose land four great streams flow. These rivers all traverse the country of the Mæotians, and fall into the Palus Mæotis. Their names are the Lycus, the Oarus, the Tanais, and the Syrgis.²

124. When Darius reached the desert, he paused from his pursuit, and halted his army upon the Oarus. Here he built eight large forts, at an equal distance from one another, sixty furlongs apart or thereabouts, the ruins of which were still remaining in my day.³ During the time that he was so occupied, the Scythians whom he had been following made a circuit by the higher regions, and re-entered Scythia. On their complete disappearance, Darius, seeing nothing more of them, left his forts half finished, and returned towards the west. He imagined that the Scythians whom he had seen were the entire nation, and that they had fled in that direction.

125. He now quickened his march, and entering Scythia, fell in with the two combined divisions of the Scythian army,⁴ and instantly gave them chase. They kept to their plan of retreating before him at the distance of a day's march; and, he still following them hotly, they led him, as had been previously settled, into the territories of the nations that had refused to become their allies, and first of all into the country of the Melanchlæni. Great disturbance was caused among this people by the invasion of the Scyths first, and then of the Persians. So, having harassed them after this sort, the Scythians led the way into the land of the Androphagi, with the same result as before; and thence passed onwards into Neuris, where their coming likewise spread dismay among the inhabitants. Still retreating they approached the Agathyrsi; but this people, which had witnessed the flight and terror of their neighbours, did not wait for the Scyths to invade them, but sent a herald to forbid them to cross their borders, and to forewarn them, that, if they made the attempt, it would be resisted by force of arms. The Agathyrsi then proceeded to the frontier, to defend their

¹ Mentioned above, ch. 22.

² This appears to be the stream called the Hyrgis in ch. 57.

³ The conjecture is probable that these supposed "forts" were ruined barrows—perhaps of larger size and better material than common. Herodotus would hear of them from the Greek traders.

⁴ The divisions of Idanthyrus and Taxacis (supra, ch. 120).

country against the invaders. As for the other nations, the Melanchlæni, the Androphagi, and the Neuri, instead of defending themselves, when the Scyths and Persians overran their lands, they forgot their threats and fled away in confusion to the deserts lying towards the north. The Scythians, when the Agathyrsi forbade them to enter their country, refrained; and led the Persians back from the Neurian district into their own land.

126. This had gone on so long, and seemed so interminable, that Darius at last sent a horseman to Idanthysus, the Scythian king, with the following message:—"Thou strange man, why dost thou keep on flying before me, when there are two things thou mightest do so easily? If thou deemest thyself able to resist my arms, cease thy wanderings and come, let us engage in battle. Or if thou art conscious that my strength is greater than thine—even so thou shouldest cease to run away—thou hast but to bring thy lord earth and water, and to come at once to a conference."

127. To this message Idanthysus, the Scythian king, replied:—"This is my way, Persian. I never fear men or fly from them. I have not done so in times past, nor do I now fly from thee. There is nothing new or strange in what I do; I only follow my common mode of life in peaceful years. Now I will tell thee why I do not at once join battle with thee. We Scythians have neither towns nor cultivated lands, which might induce us, through fear of their being taken or ravaged, to be in any hurry to fight with you. If, however, you must needs come to blows with us speedily, look you now, there are our fathers' tombs¹—seek them out, and attempt to meddle with them—then ye shall see whether or no we will fight with you. Till ye do this, be sure we shall not join battle, unless it pleases us. This is my answer to the challenge to fight. As for lords, I acknowledge only Jove my ancestor,² and Vesta, the Scythian queen. Earth and water, the tribute thou askedst, I do not send, but thou shalt soon receive more suitable gifts. Last of all, in return for thy calling thyself my lord, I say to thee, 'Go weep.'" (This is what men mean by the Scythian mode of speech.) So the herald departed, bearing this message to Darius.

128. When the Scythian kings heard the name of slavery they were filled with rage, and despatched the division under

¹ The tombs of the *kings* seem to be meant.

² Supra, ch. 5.

Scopasis to which the Sauromatæ were joined, with orders that they should seek a conference with the Ionians, who had been left at the Ister to guard the bridge. Meanwhile the Scythians who remained behind resolved no longer to lead the Persians hither and thither about their country, but to fall upon them whenever they should be at their meals. So they waited till such times, and then did as they had determined. In these combats the Scythian horse always put to flight the horse of the enemy; these last, however, when routed, fell back upon their foot, who never failed to afford them support; while the Scythians, on their side, as soon as they had driven the horse in, retired again, for fear of the foot. By night too the Scythians made many similar attacks.

129. There was one very strange thing which greatly advantaged the Persians, and was of equal disservice to the Scyths, in these assaults on the Persian camp. This was the braying of the asses and the appearance of the mules. For, as I observed before, the land of the Scythians produces neither ass nor mule, and contains no single specimen of either animal, by reason of the cold. So, when the asses brayed, they frightened the Scythian cavalry; and often, in the middle of a charge, the horses, hearing the noise made by the asses, would take fright and wheel round, pricking up their ears, and showing astonishment. This was owing to their having never heard the noise, or seen the form, of the animal before: and it was not without some little influence on the progress of the war.

130. The Scythians, when they perceived signs that the Persians were becoming alarmed, took steps to induce them not to quit Scythia, in the hope, if they stayed, of inflicting on them the greater injury, when their supplies should altogether fail. To effect this, they would leave some of their cattle exposed with the herdsmen, while they themselves moved away to a distance: the Persians would make a foray, and take the beasts, whereupon they would be highly elated.

131. This they did several times, until at last Darius was at his wits' end; hereon the Scythian princes, understanding how matters stood, despatched a herald to the Persian camp with presents for the king: these were, a bird, a mouse, a frog, and five arrows. The Persians asked the bearer to tell them what these gifts might mean, but he made answer that he had no orders except to deliver them, and return again with all speed. If the Persians were wise, he added, they would find out the

meaning for themselves. So when they heard this, they held a council to consider the matter.

132. Darius gave it as his opinion, that the Scyths intended a surrender of themselves and their country, both land and water, into his hands. This he conceived to be the meaning of the gifts, because the mouse is an inhabitant of the earth, and eats the same food as man, while the frog passes his life in the water; the bird bears a great resemblance to the horse, and the arrows might signify the surrender of all their power. To the explanation of Darius, Gobryas, one of the seven conspirators against the Magus, opposed another which was as follows:—"Unless, Persians, ye can turn into birds and fly up into the sky, or become mice and burrow under the ground, or make yourselves frogs, and take refuge in the fens, ye will never make escape from this land, but die pierced by our arrows." Such were the meanings which the Persians assigned to the gifts.

133. The single division of the Scyths, which in the early part of the war had been appointed to keep guard about the Palus Mæotis, and had now been sent to get speech of the Ionians stationed at the Ister, addressed them, on reaching the bridge, in these words;—"Men of Ionia, we bring you freedom, if ye will only do as we recommend. Darius, we understand, enjoined you to keep your guard here at this bridge just sixty days; then, if he did not appear, you were to return home. Now, therefore, act so as to be free from blame, alike in his sight, and in ours. Tarry here the appointed time, and at the end go your ways." Having said this, and received a promise from the Ionians to do as they desired, the Scythians hastened back with all possible speed.

134. After the sending of the gifts to Darius, the part of the Scythian army, which had not marched to the Ister, drew out in battle array horse and foot¹ against the Persians, and seemed about to come to an engagement. But as they stood in battle array, it chanced that a hare started up between them and the Persians, and set to running; when immediately all the Scyths who saw it, rushed off in pursuit, with great confusion and loud cries and shouts. Darius, hearing the noise, inquired the cause of it, and was told that the Scythians were all engaged in hunting a hare. On this he turned to those with whom he was wont to converse, and said:—"These men do indeed despise

¹ We now hear for the first time of the Scythians having infantry. It is scarcely possible that they really possessed any such force. The nomade nations of these countries have always lived on horseback, and are utterly helpless on foot.

us utterly: and now I see that Gobryas was right about the Scythian gifts. As, therefore, his opinion is now mine likewise, it is time we form some wise plan, whereby we may secure ourselves a safe return to our homes." "Ah! sire," Gobryas rejoined, "I was well nigh sure, ere I came here, that this was an impracticable race—since our coming I am yet more convinced of it, especially now that I see them making game of us. My advice is, therefore, that, when night falls, we light our fires as we are wont to do at other times, and leaving behind us on some pretext that portion of our army which is weak and unequal to hardship, taking care also to leave our asses tethered, retreat from Scythia, before our foes march forward to the Ister and destroy the bridge, or the Ionians come to any resolution which may lead to our ruin."

135. So Gobryas advised; and when night came, Darius followed his counsel, and leaving his sick soldiers, and those whose loss would be of least account, with the asses also tethered about the camp, marched away. The asses were left that their noise might be heard: the men, really because they were sick and useless, but under the pretence that he was about to fall upon the Scythians with the flower of his troops, and that they meanwhile were to guard his camp for him. Having thus declared his plans to the men whom he was deserting, and having caused the fires to be lighted, Darius set forth, and marched hastily towards the Ister. The asses, aware of the departure of the host, brayed louder than ever; and the Scythians, hearing the sound, entertained no doubt of the Persians being still in the same place.

136. When day dawned, the men who had been left behind, perceiving that they were betrayed by Darius, stretched out their hands towards the Scythians, and spoke as befitted their situation. The enemy no sooner heard, than they quickly joined all their troops in one, and both portions of the Scythian army,—alike that which consisted of a single division, and that made up of two,¹—accompanied by all their allies, the Sauro-matæ, the Budini, and the Gelôni, set off in pursuit, and made straight for the Ister. As, however, the Persian army was chiefly foot, and had no knowledge of the routes, which are not cut out in Scythia; while the Scyths were all horsemen and well acquainted with the shortest way; it so happened that the two armies missed one another, and the Scythians, getting far

¹ Vide *supra*, ch. 120.

ahead of their adversaries, came first to the bridge. Finding that the Persians were not yet arrived, they addressed the Ionians, who were aboard their ships, in these words:—"Men of Ionia, the number of your days is out, and ye do wrong to remain. Fear doubtless has kept you here hitherto: now, however, you may safely break the bridge, and hasten back to your homes, rejoicing that you are free, and thanking for it the gods and the Scythians. Your former lord and master we undertake so to handle, that he will never again make war upon any one."

137. The Ionians now held a council. Miltiades the Athenian, who was king of the Chersonesites upon the Hellespont,¹ and their commander at the Ister, recommended the other generals to do as the Scythians wished, and restore freedom to Ionia. But Histiaëus the Milesian opposed this advice. "It is through Darius," he said, "that we enjoy our thrones in our several states. If his power be overturned, I cannot continue lord of Miletus, nor ye of your cities. For there is not one of them which will not prefer democracy to kingly rule." Then the other captains, who, till Histiaëus spoke, were about to vote with Miltiades, changed their minds, and declared in favour of the last speaker.

138. The following were the voters on this occasion—all of them men who stood high in the esteem of the Persian king: the tyrants of the Hellespont,—Daphnis of Abydos, Hippoclus of Lampsacus, Herophantus of Parium, Metrodôrus of Proconnêsus, Aristagoras of Cyzicus, and Ariston of Byzantium;² the Ionian princes—Strattis of Chios, Æaces of Samos, Laodamas of Phocæa, and Histiaëus of Miletus, the man who had opposed Miltiades. Only one Æolian of note was present, to wit, Aristagoras³ of Cymé.

139. Having resolved to follow the advice of Histiaëus, the Greek leaders further determined to speak and act as follows. In order to appear to the Scythians to be doing something, when in fact they were doing nothing of consequence, and likewise to prevent them from forcing a passage across the Ister by the bridge, they resolved to break up the part of the bridge which abutted on Scythia, to the distance of a bowshot from the river bank; and to assure the Scythians, while the demolition

¹ Concerning the mode in which this sovereignty came into the family of Miltiades, vide *infra*, Book vi. chs. 34-36.

² Except Byzantium, all these places are on the Asiatic side.

³ Of whom we hear again, *infra*, v. 37-8.

was proceeding, that there was nothing which they would not do to pleasure them. Such were the additions made to the resolution of Histiaëus; and then Histiaëus himself stood forth and made answer to the Scyths in the name of all the Greeks:—"Good is the advice which ye have brought us, Scythians, and well have ye done to come here with such speed. Your efforts have now put us into the right path; and our efforts shall not be wanting to advance your cause. Your own eyes see that we are engaged in breaking the bridge; and, believe us, we will work zealously to procure our own freedom. Meantime, while we labour here at our task, be it your business to seek them out, and, when found, for our sakes, as well as your own, to visit them with the vengeance which they so well deserve."

140. Again the Scyths put faith in the promises of the Ionian chiefs, and retraced their steps, hoping to fall in with the Persians. They missed, however, the enemy's whole line of march; their own former acts being to blame for it. Had they not ravaged all the pasturages of that region, and filled in all the wells, they would have easily found the Persians whenever they chose. But, as it turned out, the measures which seemed to them so wisely planned were exactly what caused their failure. They took a route where water was to be found and fodder could be got for their horses, and on this track sought their adversaries, expecting that they too would retreat through regions where these things were to be obtained. The Persians, however, kept strictly to the line of their former march, never for a moment departing from it; and even so gained the bridge with difficulty. It was night when they arrived, and their terror, when they found the bridge broken up, was great; for they thought that perhaps the Ionians had deserted them.

141. Now there was in the army of Darius a certain man, an Egyptian, who had a louder voice than any other man in the world. This person was bid by Darius to stand at the water's edge, and call Histiaëus the Milesian. The fellow did as he was bid; and Histiaëus, hearing him at the very first summons, brought the fleet to assist in conveying the army across, and once more made good the bridge.

142. By these means the Persians escaped from Scythia, while the Scyths sought for them in vain, again missing their track.¹ And hence the Scythians are accustomed to say of the

¹ That Darius led an expedition into Scythia, across the Canal of Constantinople and the Danube, may be regarded as historically certain.

Ionians, by way of reproach, that, if they be looked upon as freemen, they are the basest and most dastardly of all mankind—but if they be considered as under servitude, they are the faithfulest of slaves, and the most fondly attached to their lords.

143. Darius, having passed through Thrace, reached Sestos in the Chersonese, whence he crossed by the help of his fleet into Asia, leaving a Persian, named Megabazus, commander on the European side. This was the man on whom Darius once conferred special honour by a compliment which he paid him before all the Persians. He was about to eat some pomegranates, and had opened the first, when his brother Artabanus asked him “what he would like to have in as great plenty as the seeds of the pomegranate?” Darius answered—“Had I as many men like Megabazus as there are seeds here, it would please me better than to be lord of Greece.” Such was the compliment wherewith Darius honoured the general to whom at this time he gave the command of the troops left in Europe, amounting in all to some eighty thousand men.

144. This same Megabazus got himself an undying remembrance among the Hellespontians, by a certain speech which he made. It came to his knowledge, while he was staying at Byzantium, that the Chalcedonians made their settlement seventeen years earlier than the Byzantines. “Then,” said he, “the Chalcedonians must at that time have been labouring under blindness—otherwise, when so far more excellent a site was open to them, they would never have chosen one so greatly inferior.” Megabazus now, having been appointed to take the command upon the Hellespont, employed himself in the reduction of all those states which had not of their own accord joined the Medes.

145. About this very time another great expedition was undertaken against Libya,¹ on a pretext which I will relate when I have premised certain particulars. The descendants of the Argonauts in the third generation,² driven out of Lemnos by the Pelasgi who carried off the Athenian women from Brauron,³

¹ Vide infra, ch. 167.

² The myth ran, that in Lemnos at the time of the Argonautic expedition there were no males, the women having revenged their ill-treatment upon the men by murdering them all. The Argonauts touched at the island, and were received with great favour. They stayed some months, and the subsequent population of the island was the fruit of this visit. Hypsipylé, the queen, had twin sons by Jason.

³ Vide infra, vi. 138.

took ship and went to Lacedæmon, where, seating themselves on Mount Taygetum,¹ they proceeded to kindle their fires. The Lacedæmonians, seeing this, sent a herald to inquire of them "who they were, and from what region they had come;" whereupon they made answer, "that they were Minyæ,² sons of the heroes by whom the ship Argo was manned; for these persons had stayed awhile in Lemnos, and had there become their progenitors." On hearing this account of their descent, the Lacedæmonians sent to them a second time, and asked, "what was their object in coming to Lacedæmon, and there kindling their fires?" They answered, "that, driven from their own land by the Pelasgi, they had come, as was most reasonable, to their fathers;³ and their wish was to dwell with them in their country, partake their privileges, and obtain allotments of land. It seemed good to the Lacedæmonians to receive the Minyæ among them on their own terms; to assign them lands, and enrol them in their tribes. What chiefly moved them to this was the consideration that the sons of Tyndarus⁴ had sailed on board the Argo. The Minyæ, on their part, forthwith married Spartan wives, and gave the wives, whom they had married in Lemnos, to Spartan husbands.

146. However, before much time had elapsed, the Minyæ began to wax wanton, demanded to share the throne, and committed other impieties: whereupon the Lacedæmonians passed on them sentence of death, and, seizing them, cast them into prison. Now the Lacedæmonians never put criminals to death in the daytime, but always at night. When the Minyæ, accordingly, were about to suffer, their wives, who were not only citizens, but daughters of the chief men among the Spartans, entreated to be allowed to enter the prison, and have some talk with their lords; and the Spartans, not expecting any fraud from such a quarter, granted their request. The women entered the prison, gave their own clothes to their husbands, and received theirs in exchange: after which the Minyæ, dressed in their wives' garments, and thus passing for women, went forth.

¹ Taygetum or Taygetus (Pliny) is the high mountain-range west of the valley of the Eurotas, the modern *Pentadactylon*.

² The Argonauts generally were called Minyæ.

³ According to some, Hercules himself was one of the Argonauts and accompanied the expedition beyond Lemnos. But the reference here is evidently to Castor and Pollux, the two great heroes of Sparta, who are always enumerated among the companions of Jason.

⁴ Castor and Pollux.

Having effected their escape in this manner, they seated themselves once more upon Taÿgetum.

147. It happened that at this very time Theras, son of Autesion (whose father Tisamenus was the son of Thersander, and grandson of Polynices), was about to lead out a colony from Lacedæmon. This Theras, by birth a Cadmeian, was uncle on the mother's side to the two sons of Aristodêmus, Procles and Eurysthenes, and, during their infancy, administered in their right the royal power. When his nephews, however, on attaining to man's estate, took the government, Theras, who could not bear to be under the authority of others after he had wielded authority so long himself, resolved to leave Sparta, and cross the sea to join his kindred. There were in the island now called Thera,¹ but at that time Callisté, certain descendants of Membliarus, the son of Pœciles, a Phœnician. (For Cadmus, the son of Agenor, when he was sailing in search of Europé, made a landing on this island; and, either because the country pleased him, or because he had a purpose in so doing,² left there a number of Phœnicians, and with them his own kinsman Membliarus. Callisté had been inhabited by this race for eight generations of men, before the arrival of Theras from Lacedæmon.)

148. Theras now, having with him a certain number of men from each of the tribes, was setting forth on his expedition hitherward. Far from intending to drive out the former inhabitants, he regarded them as his near kin, and meant to settle among them. It happened that just at this time the Minyæ, having escaped from their prison, had taken up their station upon Mount Taÿgetum; and the Lacedæmonians, wishing to destroy them, were considering what was best to be done, when Theras begged their lives, undertaking to remove them from the territory. His prayer being granted, he took ship, and sailed, with three triaconters,³ to join the descendants of Membliarus. He was not, however, accompanied by all the Minyæ, but only by some few of them. The greater number fled to the land of the Paroreats, and Caucons, whom they drove out, themselves

¹ Thera is the island, or group of islands, now known by the name of Santorin, lying to the south of the other Cyclades.

² It is conjectured that the real "purpose" was to found a settlement for dyeing, as the *murex*, which furnished the precious Tyrian purple, was plentiful in that part of the Mediterranean.

³ Triaconters were vessels of 30 oars, 15 on each side, in which the rowers all sat upon the same level. Compare the account given of penteconters (*supra*, i. 152).

occupying the region in six bodies, by which were afterwards built the towns of Lepreum, Macistus, Phryxæ, Pyrgus, Epium, and Nudium; whereof the greater part were in my day demolished by the Eleans.

149. The island was called Thera after the name of its founder. This same Theras had a son, who refused to cross the sea with him; Theras therefore left him behind, "a sheep," as he said, "among wolves." From this speech his son came to be called *Æolycus*, a name which afterwards grew to be the only one by which he was known. This *Æolycus* was the father of *Ægeus*, from whom sprang the *Ægîdæ*, a great tribe in Sparta. The men of this tribe lost at one time all their children, whereupon they were bidden by an oracle to build a temple to the furies of *Laïus* and *Ædipus*; they complied, and the mortality ceased. The same thing happened in Thera to the descendants of these men.

150. Thus far the history is delivered without variation both by the Theræans and the Lacedæmonians; but from this point we have only the Theræan narrative. *Grinus* (they say), the son of *Æsanius*, a descendant of Theras, and king of the island of Thera, went to Delphi to offer a hecatomb on behalf of his native city. He was accompanied by a large number of the citizens, and among the rest by *Battus*, the son of *Polymnestus*, who belonged to the Minyan family of the *Euphemidæ*. On *Grinus* consulting the oracle about sundry matters, the Pythoness gave him for answer, "that he should found a city in Libya." *Grinus* replied to this: "I, O king! am too far advanced in years, and too inactive, for such a work. Bid one of these youngsters undertake it." As he spoke, he pointed towards *Battus*; and thus the matter rested for that time. When the embassy returned to Thera, small account was taken of the oracle by the Theræans, as they were quite ignorant where Libya was, and were not so venturesome as to send out a colony in the dark.

151. Seven years passed from the utterance of the oracle, and not a drop of rain fell in Thera: all the trees in the island, except one, were killed with the drought. The Theræans upon this sent to Delphi, and were reminded reproachfully, that they had never colonised Libya. So, as there was no help for it, they sent messengers to Crete, to inquire whether any of the Cretans, or of the strangers sojourning among them, had ever travelled as far as Libya: and these messengers of theirs, in

their wanderings about the island, among other places visited Itanus,¹ where they fell in with a man, whose name was Corôbius, a dealer in purple. In answer to their inquiries, he told them that contrary winds had once carried him to Libya, where he had gone ashore on a certain island which was named Platea.² So they hired this man's services, and took him back with them to Thera. A few persons then sailed from Thera to reconnoitre. Guided by Corôbius to the island of Platea, they left him there with provisions for a certain number of months, and returned home with all speed to give their countrymen an account of the island.

152. During their absence, which was prolonged beyond the time that had been agreed upon, Corôbius' provisions failed him. He was relieved, however, after a while by a Samian vessel, under the command of a man named Colæus, which, on its way to Egypt, was forced to put in at Platea. The crew, informed by Corôbius of all the circumstances, left him sufficient food for a year. They themselves quitted the island; and, anxious to reach Egypt, made sail in that direction, but were carried out of their course by a gale of wind from the east. The storm not abating, they were driven past the pillars of Hercules, and at last, by some special guiding providence, reached Tartessus. This trading town was in those days a virgin port, unfrequented by the merchants. The Samians, in consequence, made by the return-voyage a profit greater than any Greeks before their day, excepting Sostratus, son of Laodamas, an Eginetan, with whom no one else can compare. From the tenth part of their gains, amounting to six talents,³ the Samians made a brazen vessel, in shape like an Argive wine-bowl, adorned with the heads of griffins standing out in high relief.⁴ This bowl, supported by three kneeling colossal figures in bronze, of the height of seven cubits, was placed as an offering in the temple of Juno at Samos. The aid given to Corôbius was the original cause of that close friendship which afterwards united the Cyrenæans and Theræans with the Samians.

153. The Theræans who had left Corôbius at Platea, when

¹ Itanus lay at the eastern extremity of Crete.

² There can be little doubt that Platea is the small island of *Bomba*, which lies off the African coast in the gulf of the same name, lat. 32° 20', long. 23° 15'.

³ About £1460 of our money. The entire profit was therefore between £14,000 and £15,000.

⁴ Concerning the eminence of Samos in the arts, vide supra, Bk. iii. ch. 60.

they reached Thera, told their countrymen that they had colonised an island on the coast of Libya. They of Thera, upon this, resolved that men should be sent to join the colony from each of their seven districts, and that the brothers in every family should draw lots to determine who were to go. Battus was chosen to be king and leader of the colony. So these men departed for Platea on board of two penteconters.

154. Such is the account which the Theræans give. In the sequel of the history their accounts tally with those of the people of Cyréné; but in what they relate of Battus these two nations differ most widely. The following is the Cyrenaic story. There was once a king named Etearchus, who ruled over Axus, a city in Crete, and had a daughter named Phronima. This girl's mother having died, Etearchus married a second wife; who no sooner took up her abode in his house than she proved a true step-mother to poor Phronima, always vexing her, and contriving against her every sort of mischief. At last she taxed her with light conduct; and Etearchus, persuaded by his wife that the charge was true, bethought himself of a most barbarous mode of punishment. There was a certain Theræan, named Themison, a merchant, living at Axus. This man Etearchus invited to be his friend and guest, and then induced him to swear that he would do him any service he might require.¹ No sooner had he given the promise, than the king fetched Phronima, and, delivering her into his hands, told him to carry her away and throw her into the sea. Hereupon Themison, full of indignation at the fraud whereby his oath had been procured, dissolved forthwith the friendship, and, taking the girl with him, sailed away from Crete. Having reached the open main, to acquit himself of the obligation under which he was laid by his oath to Etearchus, he fastened ropes about the damsel, and, letting her down into the sea, drew her up again, and so made sail for Thera.

155. At Thera, Polymnêstus, one of the chief citizens of the place, took Phronima to be his concubine. The fruit of this union was a son, who stammered and had a lisp in his speech. According to the Cyrenæans and Theræans, the name given to the boy was Battus: in my opinion, however, he was called at the first something else, and only got the name of Battus after his arrival in Libya, assuming it either in consequence of the words addressed to him by the Delphian oracle, or on account of the office which he held. For, in the Libyan tongue,

¹ Of this practice we have another instance, *infra*, vi. 62.

the word "Battus" means "a king." And this, I think, was the reason why the Pythoness addressed him as she did: she knew he was to be a king in Libya, and so she used the Libyan word in speaking to him. For after he had grown to man's estate, he made a journey to Delphi, to consult the oracle about his voice; when, upon his putting his question, the Pythoness thus replied to him:—

"Battus, thou camest to ask of thy voice; but Phœbus Apollo
Bids thee establish a city in Libya, abounding in fleeces;"

which was as if she had said in her own tongue, "King, thou camest to ask of thy voice." Then he replied, "Mighty lord, I did indeed come hither to consult thee about my voice, but thou speakest to me of quite other matters, bidding me colonise Libya—an impossible thing! what power have I? what followers?" Thus he spake, but he did not persuade the Pythoness to give him any other response; so, when he found that she persisted in her former answer, he left her speaking, and set out on his return to Thera.

156. After a while, everything began to go wrong both with Battus and with the rest of the Theræans, whereupon these last, ignorant of the cause of their sufferings, sent to Delphi to inquire for what reason they were afflicted. The Pythoness in reply told them, "that if they and Battus would make a settlement at Cyréné in Libya, things would go better with them." Upon this the Theræans sent out Battus with two penteconters, and with these he proceeded to Libya, but within a little time, not knowing what else to do, the men returned and arrived off Thera. The Theræans, when they saw the vessels approaching, received them with showers of missiles, would not allow them to come near the shore, and ordered the men to sail back from whence they came. Thus compelled to return, they settled on an island near the Libyan coast, which (as I have already said) was called Platea. In size it is reported to have been about equal to the city of Cyréné, as it now stands.

157. In this place they continued two years, but at the end of that time, as their ill luck still followed them, they left the island to the care of one of their number, and went in a body to Delphi, where they made complaint at the shrine, to the effect that, notwithstanding they had colonised Libya, they prospered as poorly as before. Hereon the Pythoness made them the following answer:—

" Knowest thou better than I, fair Libya abounding in fleeces?
Better the stranger than he who has trod it? Oh! clever Theræans! "

Battus and his friends, when they heard this, sailed back to Platea: it was plain the god would not hold them acquitted of the colony till they were absolutely in Libya. So, taking with them the man whom they had left upon the island, they made a settlement on the mainland directly opposite Platea, fixing themselves at a place called Aziris, which is closed in on both sides by the most beautiful hills, and on one side is washed by a river.¹

158. Here they remained six years, at the end of which time the Libyans induced them to move, promising that they would lead them to a better situation.² So the Greeks left Aziris and were conducted by the Libyans towards the west, their journey being so arranged, by the calculation of their guides, that they passed in the night the most beautiful district of that whole country, which is the region called Irasa. The Libyans brought them to a spring, which goes by the name of Apollo's fountain, and told them—" Here, Grecians, is the proper place for you to settle; for here the sky leaks."

159. During the lifetime of Battus, the founder of the colony, who reigned forty years, and during that of his son Arcesilaüs, who reigned sixteen, the Cyrenæans continued at the same level, neither more nor fewer in number than they were at the first. But in the reign of the third king, Battus, surnamed the Happy, the advice of the Pythoness brought Greeks from every quarter into Libya, to join the settlement. The Cyrenæans had offered to all comers a share in their lands; and the oracle had spoken as follows:—

" He that is backward to share in the pleasant Libyan acres,³
Sooner or later, I warn him, will feel regret at his folly."

Thus a great multitude were collected together to Cyréné, and the Libyans of the neighbourhood found themselves stripped of large portions of their lands. So they, and their king Adicran, being robbed and insulted by the Cyrenæans, sent messengers

¹ If Platea is *Bomba*, the Aziris of Herodotus must be sought in the valley of the *Temimeh*, the ancient Paliurus.

² The friendly terms on which the Greeks stand towards the natives *at the first*, is here very apparent. Their position resembles that of the first English settlers in America.

³ The beauty and fertility of the Cyrenaica are celebrated by all who visit it.

to Egypt, and put themselves under the rule of Apries, the Egyptian monarch; who, upon this, levied a vast army of Egyptians, and sent them against Cyréné. The inhabitants of that place left their walls and marched out in force to the district of Irasa, where, near the spring called Thesté, they engaged the Egyptian host, and defeated it. The Egyptians, who had never before made trial of the prowess of the Greeks, and so thought but meanly of them, were routed with such slaughter that but a very few of them ever got back home. For this reason, the subjects of Apries, who laid the blame of the defeat on him, revolted from his authority.¹

160. This Battus left a son called Arcesilaüs, who, when he came to the throne, had dissensions with his brothers, which ended in their quitting him and departing to another region of Libya,² where, after consulting among themselves, they founded the city, which is still called by the name then given to it, Barca. At the same time they endeavoured to induce the Libyans to revolt from Cyréné. Not long afterwards Arcesilaüs made an expedition against the Libyans who had received his brothers and been prevailed upon to revolt; and they, fearing his power, fled to their countrymen who dwelt towards the east. Arcesilaüs pursued, and chased them to a place called Leucon, which is in Libya, where the Libyans resolved to risk a battle. Accordingly they engaged the Cyrenæans, and defeated them so entirely that as many as seven thousand of their heavy-armed were slain in the fight. Arcesilaüs, after this blow, fell sick, and, whilst he was under the influence of a draught which he had taken, was strangled by Learchus, one of his brothers. This Learchus was afterwards entrapped by Eryxo, the widow of Arcesilaüs, and put to death.

161. Battus, Arcesilaüs' son, succeeded to the kingdom, a lame man, who limped in his walk. Their late calamities now induced the Cyrenæans to send to Delphi and inquire of the god what form of government they had best set up to secure themselves prosperity. The Pythoness answered by recommending them to fetch an arbitrator from Mantinea in Arcadia.³ Accord-

¹ Vide supra, ii. 161.

² There is no difficulty in determining the exact site of Cyréné. The Arabic name *Grennah* (Κυρήνη, or in the Doric Greek of the place, Κυράνα, sounded *Kyrāna*) is sufficiently close to mark the identity of the ruined city, which is so called, with the Cyréné of former times. The country around Grennah is celebrated for its fertility.

³ Mantinea was situated near the eastern frontier of Arcadia.

ingly they sent; and the Mantineans gave them a man named Demônax,¹ a person of high repute among the citizens; who, on his arrival at Cyréné, having first made himself acquainted with all the circumstances, proceeded to enrol the people in three tribes. One he made to consist of the Theræans and their vassals; another of the Peloponnesians and Cretans; and a third of the various islanders.² Besides this, he deprived the king Battus of his former privileges, only reserving for him certain sacred lands and offices;³ while, with respect to the powers which had hitherto been exercised by the king, he gave them all into the hands of the people.

162. Thus matters rested during the lifetime of this Battus, but when his son Arcesilaüs came to the throne, great disturbance arose about the privileges. For Arcesilaüs, son of Battus the lame and Pheretima, refused to submit to the arrangements of Demônax the Mantinean, and claimed all the powers of his forefathers. In the contention which followed Arcesilaüs was worsted, whereupon he fled to Samos, while his mother took refuge at Salamis in the island of Cyprus. Salamis was at that time ruled by Evelthon, the same who offered at Delphi the censer which is in the treasury of the Corinthians, a work deserving of admiration. Of him Pheretima made request, that he would give her an army, whereby she and her son might regain Cyréné. But Evelthon, preferring to give her anything rather than an army, made her various presents. Pheretima accepted them all, saying, as she took them: "Good is this too, O king! but better were it to give me the army which I crave at thy hands." Finding that she repeated these words each time that he presented her with a gift, Evelthon at last sent her a golden spindle and distaff, with the wool ready for spinning. Again she uttered the same speech as before, whereupon Evelthon rejoined—"These are the gifts I present to women, not armies."

163. At Samos, meanwhile, Arcesilaüs was collecting troops by the promise of granting them lands. Having in this way drawn together a vast host, he sent to Delphi to consult the oracle about his restoration. The answer of the Pythoness was this: "Loxias grants thy race to rule over Cyréné, till four kings Battus, four Arcesilaüs by name, have passed away.

¹ Demônax, the Mantinean lawgiver.

² Who would be principally Ionians.

³ The early kings of the various Grecian states, like those of Rome, were uniformly priests likewise.

Beyond this term of eight generations of men, he warns you not to seek to extend your reign. Thou, for thy part, be gentle, when thou art restored. If thou findest the oven full of jars, bake not the jars; but be sure to speed them on their way. If, however, thou heatest the oven, then avoid the island—else thou wilt die thyself, and with thee the most beautiful bull.”

164. So spake the Pythoness. Arcesilaüs upon this returned to Cyrêné, taking with him the troops which he had raised in Samos. There he obtained possession of the supreme power; whereupon, forgetful of the oracle, he took proceedings against those who had driven him into banishment. Some of them fled from him and quitted the country for good; others fell into his hands and were sent to suffer death in Cyprus. These last happening on their passage to put in through stress of weather at Cnidus, the Cnidians rescued them, and sent them off to Thera. Another body found a refuge in the great tower of Aglômachus, a private edifice, and were there destroyed by Arcesilaüs, who heaped wood around the place, and burnt them to death. Aware, after the deed was done, that this was what the Pythoness meant when she warned him, if he found the jars in the oven, not to bake them, he withdrew himself of his own accord from the city of Cyrêné, believing that to be the island of the oracle,¹ and fearing to die as had been prophesied. Being married to a relation of his own, a daughter of Alazir, at that time king of the Barcæans, he took up his abode with him. At Barca, however, certain of the citizens, together with a number of Cyrenæan exiles, recognising him as he walked in the forum, killed him; they slew also at the same time Alazir, his father-in-law. So Arcesilaüs, wittingly or unwittingly, disobeyed the oracle, and thereby fulfilled his destiny.

165. Pheretima, the mother of Arcesilaüs, during the time that her son, after working his own ruin, dwelt at Barca, continued to enjoy all his privileges at Cyrêné, managing the government, and taking her seat at the council-board. No sooner, however, did she hear of the death of her son at Barca, than leaving Cyrêné, she fled in haste to Egypt. Arcesilaüs had claims for service done to Cambyses, son of Cyrus; since it was by him that Cyrêné was put under the Persian yoke, and a rate of tribute agreed upon.² Pheretima therefore went

¹ It is not very easy to see how either Cyrêné or Barca could be regarded as islands.

² Vide supra, iii. 13 and 91.

straight to Egypt, and presenting herself as a suppliant before Aryandes, entreated him to avenge her wrongs. Her son, she said, had met his death on account of his being so well affected towards the Medes.

166. Now Aryandes had been made governor of Egypt by Cambyses. He it was who in after times was punished with death by Darius for seeking to rival him. Aware, by report and also by his own eyesight, that Darius wished to leave a memorial of himself, such as no king had ever left before, Aryandes resolved to follow his example, and did so, till he got his reward. Darius had refined gold to the last perfection of purity in order to have coins struck of it: Aryandes, in his Egyptian government, did the very same with silver, so that to this day there is no such pure silver anywhere as the Aryandic. Darius, when this came to his ears, brought another charge, a charge of rebellion, against Aryandes, and put him to death.

167. At the time of which we are speaking Aryandes, moved with compassion for Pheretima, granted her all the forces which there were in Egypt, both land and sea. The command of the army he gave to Amasis, a Maraphian;¹ while Badres, one of the tribe of the Pasargadæ, was appointed to lead the fleet. Before the expedition, however, left Egypt, he sent a herald to Barca to inquire who it was that had slain king Arcesilaüs. The Barcæans replied "that they, one and all, acknowledged the deed—Arcesilaüs had done them many and great injuries." After receiving this reply, Aryandes gave the troops orders to march with Pheretima. Such was the cause which served as a pretext for this expedition: its real object was, I believe, the subjugation of Libya. For Libya is inhabited by many and various races, and of these but a very few were subjects of the Persian king, while by far the larger number held Darius in no manner of respect.

168. The Libyans dwell in the order which I will now describe. Beginning on the side of Egypt, the first Libyans are the Adyrmachidæ. These people have, in most points, the same customs as the Egyptians, but use the costume of the Libyans. Their women wear on each leg a ring made of bronze; they let their hair grow long, and when they catch any vermin on their persons, bite it and throw it away. In this they differ from all the other Libyans. They are also the only tribe with whom the custom

¹ The Maraphians were the Persian tribe next in dignity to the Pasargadæ. (Vide *supra*, i. 125.)

obtains of bringing all women about to become brides before the king, that he may choose such as are agreeable to him.¹ The Adyrmachidæ extend from the borders of Egypt to the harbour called Port Plynus.

169. Next to the Adyrmachidæ are the Gilligammæ, who inhabit the country westward as far as the island of Aphrodisias. Off this tract is the island of Platea, which the Cyrenæans colonised. Here too, upon the mainland, are Port Menelaüs, and Aziris, where the Cyrenæans once lived. The Silphium² begins to grow in this region, extending from the island of Platea on the one side to the mouth of the Syrtis on the other. The customs of the Gilligammæ are like those of the rest of their countrymen.

170. The Asbystæ³ adjoin the Gilligammæ upon the west. They inhabit the regions above Cyréné, but do not reach to the coast, which belongs to the Cyrenæans. Four-horse chariots are in more common use among them than among any other Libyans. In most of their customs they ape the manners of the Cyrenæans.⁴

171. Westward of the Asbystæ dwell the Auschisæ, who possess the country above Barca, reaching, however, to the sea at the place called Euesperides. In the middle of their territory is the little tribe of the Cabalians, which touches the coast near Tauchira,⁵ a city of the Barcæans. Their customs are like those of the Libyans above Cyréné.

172. The Nasamonians,⁶ a numerous people, are the western neighbours of the Auschisæ. In summer they leave their flocks and herds upon the sea-shore, and go up the country to a place called Augila,⁷ where they gather the dates from the palms, which in those parts grow thickly, and are of great size, all of them being of the fruit-bearing kind. They also chase the locusts, and, when caught, dry them in the sun, after which

¹ Compare the middle age *droit de cuissage* ["jus primæ noctis."—E.H.B.].

² This famous plant, the *laserpitium* of the Romans, which is figured upon most of the Cyrenæan and Barcæan coins, was celebrated both as an article of food and also for its medicinal virtues. It formed an important element in the ancient commerce of Cyréné.

³ The Asbystæ, being neighbours of the Cyrenæans, were well known to the Greeks.

⁴ The Cyrenæans were famous for their skill in chariot-driving.

⁵ Tauchira retains its name as *Taukra*, *Tokrah*, or *Terkera*. Considerable ruins mark the site.

⁶ They dwelt around the shores of the Greater Syrtis (vide supra, ii. 32).

⁷ This place retains its name unchanged. It lies on the great route from Egypt to Fezzan.

they grind them to powder, and, sprinkling this upon their milk, so drink it. Each man among them has several wives, in their intercourse with whom they resemble the Massagetæ. The following are their customs in the swearing of oaths and the practice of augury. The man, as he swears, lays his hand upon the tomb of some one considered to have been pre-eminently just and good, and so doing swears by his name. For divination they betake themselves to the sepulchres of their own ancestors, and, after praying, lie down to sleep upon their graves; by the dreams which then come to them they guide their conduct. When they pledge their faith to one another, each gives the other to drink out of his hand; if there be no liquid to be had, they take up dust from the ground,¹ and put their tongues to it.

173. On the country of the Nasamonians borders that of the Psylli, who were swept away under the following circumstances. The south-wind had blown for a long time and dried up all the tanks in which their water was stored. Now the whole region within the Syrtis is utterly devoid of springs. Accordingly the Psylli took counsel among themselves, and by common consent made war upon the south-wind—so at least the Libyans say, I do but repeat their words—they went forth and reached the desert; but there the south-wind rose and buried them under heaps of sand: whereupon, the Psylli being destroyed, their lands passed to the Nasamonians.

174. Above the Nasamonians, towards the south, in the district where the wild beasts abound, dwell the Garamantians, who avoid all society or intercourse with their fellow-men, have no weapon of war, and do not know how to defend themselves.

175. These border the Nasamonians on the south: westward along the sea-shore their neighbours are the Macæ, who, by letting the locks about the crown of their head grow long, while they clip them close everywhere else, make their hair resemble a crest. In war these people use the skins of ostriches for shields.² The river Cinyps³ rises among them from the height called “the Hill of the Graces,” and runs from thence through their country to the sea. The Hill of the Graces is thickly covered with wood, and is thus very unlike the rest of Libya, which is bare. It is distant two hundred furlongs from the sea.

¹ So the Mahometan law of ablution allows sand to be used where water cannot be procured.

² Compare vii. 70.

³ Perhaps the *Wad' el Khâhan* has the best right to be considered the ancient Cinyps.

176. Adjoining the Macæ are the Gindanes, whose women wear on their legs anklets of leather. Each lover that a woman has gives her one; and she who can show the most is the best esteemed, as she appears to have been loved by the greatest number of men.

177. A promontory jutting out into the sea from the country of the Gindanes is inhabited by the Lotophagi,¹ who live entirely on the fruit of the lotus-tree.² The lotus fruit is about the size of the lentisk berry, and in sweetness resembles the date. The Lotophagi even succeed in obtaining from it a sort of wine.³

178. The sea-coast beyond the Lotophagi is occupied by the Machlyans, who use the lotus to some extent, though not so much as the people of whom we last spoke. The Machlyans reach as far as the great river called the Triton, which empties itself into the great lake Tritônis. Here, in this lake, is an island called Phla, which it is said the Lacedæmonians were to have colonised, according to an oracle.

179. The following is the story as it is commonly told. When Jason had finished building the Argo at the foot of Mount Pelion, he took on board the usual hecatomb, and moreover a brazen tripod. Thus equipped, he set sail, intending to coast round the Peloponnese, and so to reach Delphi. The voyage was prosperous as far as Malea; but at that point a gale of wind from the north came on suddenly, and carried him out of his course to the coast of Libya; where, before he discovered the land, he got among the shallows of Lake Tritônis. As he was turning it in his mind how he should find his way out, Triton (they say) appeared to him, and offered to show him the channel, and secure him a safe retreat, if he would give him the tripod. Jason complying, was shown by Triton the passage through the shallows; after which the god took the tripod, and, carrying it to his own temple, seated himself upon it, and, filled with prophetic fury, delivered to Jason and his companions a long prediction. "When a descendant," he said, "of one of the

¹ The country of the Lotophagi is evidently the Peninsula of *Zarzis* which is the only tract projecting from this part of the coast. They are thus brought into the position usually assigned them, the neighbourhood of the Lesser Syrtis, or Gulf of *Khabs*.

² The lotus is evidently the *Rhamnus*, now called in Arabic *Sidr*, the fruit *Nebk*. It looks and tastes rather like a bad crab-apple. It has a single stone within it. To Ulysses it was as inconvenient as modern "gold-diggings" to ship captains, since he had the greatest difficulty in keeping his sailors to the ship when they had once tasted it (Hom. Od. ix. 84 to 96).

³ Perhaps this is the origin of the Homeric myth (Od. ix. 74 et seqq.).

Argo's crew should seize and carry off the brazen tripod, then by inevitable fate would a hundred Grecian cities be built around Lake Tritônîs." The Libyans of that region, when they heard the words of this prophecy, took away the tripod and hid it.

180. The next tribe beyond the Machlyans is the tribe of the Auseans. Both these nations inhabit the borders of Lake Tritônîs, being separated from one another by the river Triton. Both also wear their hair long, but the Machlyans let it grow at the back of the head, while the Auseans have it long in front. The Ausean maidens keep year by year a feast in honour of Minerva, whereat their custom is to draw up in two bodies, and fight with stones and clubs. They say that these are rites which have come down to them from their fathers, and that they honour with them their native goddess, who is the same as the Minerva (Athené) of the Grecians. If any of the maidens die of the wounds they receive, the Auseans declare that such are false maidens. Before the fight is suffered to begin, they have another ceremony. One of the virgins, the loveliest of the number, is selected from the rest; a Corinthian helmet and a complete suit of Greek armour are publicly put upon her; and, thus adorned, she is made to mount into a chariot, and led around the whole lake in a procession. What arms they used for the adornment of their damsels before the Greeks came to live in their country, I cannot say. I imagine they dressed them in Egyptian armour, for I maintain that both the shield and the helmet came into Greece from Egypt. The Auseans declare that Minerva is the daughter of Neptune and the Lake Tritônîs¹—they say she quarrelled with her father, and applied to Jupiter, who consented to let her be his child; and so she became his adopted daughter. These people do not marry or live in families, but dwell together like the gregarious beasts. When their children are full-grown, they are brought before the assembly of the men, which is held every third month, and assigned to those whom they most resemble.

181. Such are the tribes of wandering Libyans dwelling upon the sea-coast. Above them inland is the wild-beast tract: and beyond that, a ridge of sand, reaching from Egyptian Thebes to the Pillars of Hercules. Throughout this ridge, at the distance of about ten days' journey from one another, heaps of

¹ This is the earliest form of the legend, and hence the epithet *Τριτογένεια*, so frequently applied to this goddess.

salt in large lumps lie upon hills. At the top of every hill there gushes forth from the middle of the salt a stream of water, which is both cold and sweet.¹ Around dwell men who are the last inhabitants of Libya on the side of the desert, living, as they do, more inland than the wild-beast district. Of these nations the first is that of the Ammonians, who dwell at a distance of ten days' journey from Thebes,² and have a temple derived from that of the Theban Jupiter. For at Thebes likewise, as I mentioned above,³ the image of Jupiter has a face like that of a ram. The Ammonians have another spring besides that which rises from the salt. The water of this stream is lukewarm at early dawn; at the time when the market fills it is much cooler; by noon it has grown quite cold; at this time, therefore, they water their gardens. As the afternoon advances the coldness goes off, till, about sunset, the water is once more lukewarm; still the heat increases, and at midnight it boils furiously. After this time it again begins to cool, and grows less and less hot till morning comes. This spring is called "the Fountain of the Sun."

182. Next to the Ammonians, at the distance of ten days' journey along the ridge of sand, there is a second salt-hill like the Ammonian, and a second spring. The country round is inhabited, and the place bears the name of Augila.⁴ Hither it is that the Nasamonians come to gather in the dates.

183. Ten days' journey from Augila there is again a salt-hill and a spring; palms of the fruitful kind grow here abundantly, as they do also at the other salt-hills. This region is inhabited by a nation called the Garamantians,⁵ a very powerful people, who cover the salt with mould, and then sow their crops. From thence is the shortest road to the Lotophagi, a journey of thirty days. In the Garamantian country are found the oxen which, as they graze, walk backwards. This they do because their horns curve outwards in front of their heads, so that it is not possible for them when grazing to move forwards, since in that

¹ In the Oases salt is in great abundance, and sometimes a large space is covered with an incrustation of it, which breaks like frozen mud or shallow water, under the feet. Springs frequently rise from the sand in that desert, and sometimes on the top of hillocks of sand; where the water, as Herodotus says, is always cool and sweet; the coolness being caused by the evaporation.

² *Siwah*, which is undoubtedly where the temple of Ammon stood (vide supra. iii. 26), lies at the distance of 400 geographical miles, or not less than 20 days' journey, from Thebes.

³ Vide supra, ii. 42.

⁴ [It still bears the name of Aujileh.—E. H. B.] ⁵ The modern Fezzan.

case their horns would become fixed in the ground. Only herein do they differ from other oxen, and further in the thickness and hardness of their hides. The Garamantians have four-horse chariots, in which they chase the Troglodyte Ethiopians,¹ who of all the nations whereof any account has reached our ears are by far the swiftest of foot. The Troglodytes feed on serpents, lizards, and other similar reptiles. Their language is unlike that of any other people; it sounds like the screeching of bats.

184. At the distance of ten days' journey from the Garamantians there is again another salt-hill and spring of water; around which dwell a people, called the Atarantians, who alone of all known nations are destitute of names. The title of Atarantians is borne by the whole race in common; but the men have no particular names of their own. The Atarantians, when the sun rises high in the heaven, curse him, and load him with reproaches, because (they say) he burns and wastes both their country and themselves. Once more at the distance of ten days' journey there is a salt-hill, a spring, and an inhabited tract. Near the salt is a mountain called Atlas, very taper and round; so lofty, moreover, that the top (it is said) cannot be seen, the clouds never quitting it either summer or winter.² The natives call this mountain "the Pillar of Heaven;" and they themselves take their name from it, being called Atlantes. They are reported not to eat any living thing, and never to have any dreams.

185. As far as the Atlantes the names of the nations inhabiting the sandy ridge are known to me; but beyond them my knowledge fails. The ridge itself extends as far as the Pillars of Hercules, and even further than these;³ and throughout the whole distance, at the end of every ten days' journey, there is a salt-mine, with people dwelling round it who all of them build

¹ Perhaps it would be better to translate "the Ethiopians who dwell in holes." Troglodytes have always abounded in Africa.

² The earlier writers (Homer, Hesiod, etc.) intended by that name the Peak of Teneriffe, of which they had some indistinct knowledge derived from Phœnician sources. The later, unacquainted with the great Western Ocean, placed Atlas in Africa, first regarding it as a single mountain, and then, as their geographical knowledge increased, they found there was no very remarkable mountain in North-western Africa, as a mountain chain. Herodotus is a writer of the transition period. His description is only applicable to the Peak, while his locality is Africa—not, however, the western coast, but an inland tract, probably south-eastern Algeria. Thus his mountain, if it is to be considered as having any foundation at all on fact, must represent the eastern, not the western, extremity of the Atlas chain.

³ Herodotus, it should be observed, knows that the African coast *projects* beyond the pillars.

their houses with blocks of the salt. No rain falls in these parts of Libya; if it were otherwise, the walls of these houses could not stand.¹ The salt quarried is of two colours, white and purple.² Beyond the ridge, southwards, in the direction of the interior, the country is a desert,³ with no springs, no beasts, no rain, no wood, and altogether destitute of moisture.

186. Thus from Egypt as far as Lake Tritônis Libya is inhabited by wandering tribes,⁴ whose drink is milk and their food the flesh of animals. Cow's flesh however none of these tribes ever taste, but abstain from it for the same reason as the Egyptians, neither do they any of them breed swine. Even at Cyréné, the women think it wrong to eat the flesh of the cow, honouring in this Isis, the Egyptian goddess, whom they worship both with fasts and festivals. The Barcæan women abstain, not from cow's flesh only, but also from the flesh of swine.

187. West of Lake Tritônis the Libyans are no longer wanderers, nor do they practise the same customs as the wandering people, or treat their children in the same way. For the wandering Libyans, many of them at any rate, if not all—concerning which I cannot speak with certainty—when their children come to the age of four years, burn the veins at the top of their heads with a flock from the fleece of a sheep: others burn the veins about the temples.⁵ This they do to prevent them from being plagued in their after lives by a flow of rheum from the head; and such they declare is the reason why they are so much more healthy than other men. Certainly the Libyans are the healthiest men that I know;⁶ but whether this is what makes them so, or not, I cannot positively say—the healthiest certainly they are. If when the children are being burnt convulsions come on, there is a remedy of which they have made discovery. It is to sprinkle goat's water upon the child, who thus treated, is sure to recover. In all this I only repeat what is said by the Libyans.

188. The rites which the wandering Libyans use in sacrificing

¹ They have been found in the Oasis of Ammon, and in the western part of Fezzan.

² The rock-salt of Africa is, in fact, of *three* colours.

³ He alludes to the great Sáhara.

⁴ Herodotus here indicates that he is about to resume the account of the sea-coast tribes, which was broken off at the end of ch. 180.

⁵ Burning with a red-hot iron is still practised in these countries for the cure of diseases.

⁶ Vide *supra*, ii. 77. The Tuaregs have, of all existing tribes, the best right to be regarded as the descendants of Herodotus's Libyans.

re the following. They begin with the ear of the victim, which they cut off and throw over their house: this done, they kill the animal by twisting the neck. They sacrifice to the Sun and Moon, but not to any other god. This worship is common to all the Libyans. The inhabitants of the parts about Lake Tritônis worship in addition Triton, Neptune,¹ and Minerva, the last specially.

189. The dress wherewith Minerva's statues are adorned, and her Ægis, were derived by the Greeks from the women of Libya. For, except that the garments of the Libyan women are of leather, and their fringes made of leathern thongs instead of serpents, in all else the dress of both is exactly alike. The same too itself shows that the mode of dressing the Pallas-statues came from Libya. For the Libyan women wear over their dress goat-skins stript of the hair, fringed at their edges, and coloured with vermillion;² and from these goat-skins the Greeks get their word Ægis (goat-harness). I think for my part that the loud cries uttered in our sacred rites came also from thence; for the Libyan women are greatly given to such cries and utter them very sweetly. Likewise the Greeks learnt from the Libyans to yoke four horses to a chariot.³

190. All the wandering tribes bury their dead according to the fashion of the Greeks, except the Nasamonians. They bury them sitting, and are right careful when the sick man is at the point of giving up the ghost, to make him sit and not let him lie lying down.⁴ The dwellings of these people are made of the stems of the asphodel, and of rushes wattled together. They can be carried from place to place. Such are the customs of the afore-mentioned tribes.

191. Westward of the river Triton and adjoining upon the Mæseans,⁵ are other Libyans who till the ground, and live in houses: these people are named the Maxyans. They let the hair grow long on the right side of their heads, and shave it close on the left; they besmear their bodies with red paint; and they say that they are descended from the men of Troy. Their

¹ Vide supra, ii. 50.

² Vermilion is abundant in North Africa. Red shoes are commonly worn at Tripoli. Red shawls and mantles are frequent in the interior. The African nations, too, continue to excel in the dressing and dyeing of leather.

³ Can Herodotus intend to assert a connection between Greece and Libya proper in the ante-Homeric times?

⁴ The ancient Britons often buried their dead in a sitting posture, the hands raised to the neck, and the elbows close to the knees.

⁵ Vide supra, ch. 180. Herodotus here proceeds in his enumeration of the tribes of the coast.

country and the remainder of Libya towards the west is far fuller of wild beasts, and of wood, than the country of the wandering people. For the eastern side of Libya, where the wanderers dwell, is low and sandy, as far as the river Triton; but westward of that the land of the husbandmen is very hilly, and abounds with forests and wild beasts. For this is the tract in which the huge serpents are found, and the lions, the elephants, the bears, the aspicks, and the horned asses.¹ Here too are the dog-faced creatures, and the creatures without heads, whom the Libyans declare to have their eyes in their breasts; and also the wild men, and wild women, and many other far less fabulous beasts.

192. Among the wanderers are none of these, but quite other animals; as antelopes, gazelles, buffaloes, and asses, not of the horned sort, but of a kind which does not need to drink;² also oryxes, whose horns are used for the curved sides of citherns, and whose size is about that of the ox; foxes, hyænas, porcupines, wild rams, dictyes,³ jackals, panthers, boryes,⁴ land-crocodiles about three cubits in length,⁵ very like lizards, ostriches, and little snakes, each with a single horn. All these animals are found here, and likewise those belonging to other countries, except the stag and the wild-boar; but neither stag nor wild-boar are found in any part of Libya. There are, however, three sorts of mice in these parts; the first are called two-footed;⁶ the next, zegeries, which is a Libyan word meaning "hills;" and the third, urchins. Weasels also are found in the Silphium-region, much like the Tartessian. So many, therefore, are the animals belonging to the land of the wandering Libyans, in so far at least as my researches have been able to reach.

193. Next to the Maxyan Libyans are the Zavecians, whose wives drive their chariots to battle.

194. On them border the Gyzantians; in whose country a vast deal of honey is made by bees; very much more, however, by the skill of men. The people all paint themselves red, and eat monkeys, whereof there is inexhaustible store in the hills.

195. Off their coast, as the Carthaginians report, lies an island,

¹ Elephants are not now found in the countries north of the desert. It is uncertain what animal Herodotus intends by his "horned ass;" probably some kind of antelope.

² The wild ass can live in the worst parts of the desert and needs probably less water than almost any animal. Still, however, there are no doubt times when "the wild asses quench their thirst." (Ps. civ. 11.)

³ It is impossible to say what animal is here intended.

⁴ Herodotus does not mention the camel, which may have been introduced later.

⁵ This immense lizard, or monitor, is very common in parts of Africa.

⁶ The jerboa (*Dipus jaculus* of Linnæus) is undoubtedly intended.

by name Cyraunis, the length of which is two hundred furlongs, its breadth not great, and which is soon reached from the mainland. Vines and olive-trees cover the whole of it, and there is on the island a lake, from which the young maidens of the country draw up gold-dust, by dipping into the mud birds' feathers smeared with pitch. If this be true, I know not; I must write what is said. It may be even so, however; since I myself have seen pitch drawn up out of the water from a lake on Zacynthus. At the place I speak of there are a number of lakes; but one is larger than the rest, being seventy feet every way, and two fathoms in depth. Here they let down a pole into the water, with a bunch of myrtle tied to one end, and when they raise it again, there is pitch sticking to the myrtle, which on smell is like to bitumen, but in all else is better than the pitch of Pieria. This they pour into a trench dug by the lake's side; and when a good deal has thus been got together, they draw it off and put it up in jars. Whatever falls into the lake passes underground, and comes up in the sea, which is no less than four furlongs distant. So then what is said of the island off the Libyan coast is not without likelihood.

196. The Carthaginians also relate the following:—There is a country in Libya, and a nation, beyond the Pillars of Hercules,¹ which they are wont to visit, where they no sooner arrive but forthwith they unlade their wares, and, having disposed them after an orderly fashion along the beach, leave them, and, returning aboard their ships, raise a great smoke. The natives, when they see the smoke, come down to the shore, and, laying out to view so much gold as they think the worth of the wares, withdraw to a distance. The Carthaginians upon this come ashore and look. If they think the gold enough, they take it and go their way; but if it does not seem to them sufficient, they go aboard ship once more, and wait patiently. Then the others approach and add to their gold, till the Carthaginians are content. Neither party deals unfairly by the other: for they themselves never touch the gold till it comes up to the worth of their goods, nor do the natives ever carry off the goods till the gold is taken away.

197. These be the Libyan tribes whereof I am able to give the names; and most of these cared little then, and indeed care little now, for the king of the Medes. One thing more also I can add concerning this region, namely, that, so far as our know-

¹ The trade of the Carthaginians with the western coast of Africa (outside the Straits of Gibraltar) has been fully proved.

ledge reaches, four nations, and no more, inhabit it; and two of these nations are indigenous, while two are not. The two indigenous are the Libyans and Ethiopians, who dwell respectively in the north and the south of Libya. The Phœnicians and the Greek are in-comers.¹

198. It seems to me that Libya is not to compare for goodness of soil with either Asia or Europe, except the Cinyps-region which is named after the river that waters it. This piece of land is equal to any country in the world for cereal crops, and is in nothing like the rest of Libya. For the soil here is black and springs of water abound; so that there is nothing to fear from drought; nor do heavy rains (and it rains in that part of Libya) do any harm when they soak the ground. The return of the harvest come up to the measure which prevails in Babylonia.² The soil is likewise good in the country of the Euesperites;³ for there the land brings forth in the best years a hundred-fold. But the Cinyps-region yields three hundred-fold.

199. The country of the Cyrenæans, which is the highest tract within the part of Libya inhabited by the wandering tribes,⁴ has three seasons that deserve remark. First the crops along the sea-coast begin to ripen, and are ready for the harvest and the vintage; after they have been gathered in, the crops of the middle tract above the coast-region (the hill-country, as they call it) need harvesting; while about the time when this middle crop is housed, the fruits ripen and are fit for cutting in the highest tract of all. So that the produce of the first tract has been all eaten and drunk by the time that the last harvest comes in. And the harvest-time of the Cyrenæans continues thus for eight full months. So much concerning these matters.

200. When the Persians sent from Egypt by Aryandes to help Pheretima reached Barca, they laid siege to the town, calling on those within to give up the men who had been guilty of the murder of Arcesilaüs. The townspeople, however, as they had one and all taken part in the deed, refused to entertain the proposition. So the Persians beleaguered Barca for nine months in the course of which they dug several mines from their own lines to the walls, and likewise made a number of vigorous

¹ The Egyptians are omitted, because Egypt is reckoned to Asia (supra li. 17, iv. 39 and 41).

² Vide supra, i. 193.

³ The Euesperites are the inhabitants of a town situated at the eastern extremity of the Greater Syrtis, between the Borean or Northern Promontory (*Cape Tejones*) and Tauchira. The Ptolemies changed its name to Berenice, which has since been corrupted into *Benghazi*.

⁴ Kiepert gives the height of the upper plateau of Cyrêné at 1700 feet

assaults. But their mines were discovered by a man who was a worker in brass, who went with a brazen shield all round the fortress, and laid it on the ground inside the city. In other places the shield, when he laid it down, was quite dumb; but where the ground was undermined, there the brass of the shield rang. Here, therefore, the Barcæans countermined, and slew the Persian diggers. Such was the way in which the mines were discovered; as for the assaults, the Barcæans beat them back.

201. When much time had been consumed, and great numbers had fallen on both sides, nor had the Persians lost fewer than their adversaries, Amasis, the leader of the land-army, perceiving that, although the Barcæans would never be conquered by force, they might be overcome by fraud, contrived as follows. One night he dug a wide trench, and laid light planks of wood across the opening, after which he brought mould and placed it upon the planks, taking care to make the place level with the surrounding ground. At dawn of day he summoned the Barcæans to a parley: and they gladly hearkening, the terms were at length agreed upon. Oaths were interchanged upon the ground over the hidden trench, and the agreement ran thus—"So long as the ground beneath our feet stands firm, the oath shall abide unchanged; the people of Barca agree to pay a fair sum to the king, and the Persians promise to cause no further trouble to the people of Barca." After the oath, the Barcæans, relying upon its terms, threw open all their gates, went out themselves beyond the walls, and allowed as many of the enemy as chose to enter. Then the Persians broke down their secret bridge, and rushed at speed into the town—their reason for breaking the bridge being, that so they might observe what they had sworn; for they had promised the Barcæans that the oath should continue "so long as the ground whereon they stood was firm." When, therefore, the bridge was once broken down, the oath ceased to hold.

202. Such of the Barcæans as were most guilty the Persians gave up to Pheretima, who nailed them to crosses all round the walls of the city.¹ She also cut off the breasts of their wives, and fastened them likewise about the walls. The remainder of the people she gave as booty to the Persians, except only the Battiadæ, and those who had taken no part in the murder, to whom she handed over the possession of the town.

203. The Persians now set out on their return home, carrying with them the rest of the Barcæans, whom they had made their

¹ Compare the punishment of the Babylonians by Darius (*supra*, iii. 159).

slaves. On their way they came to Cyréné; and the Cyrenæans, out of regard for an oracle, let them pass through the town. During the passage, Bares, the commander of the fleet, advised to seize the place; but Amasis, the leader of the land-force, would not consent; "because," he said, "they had only been charged to attack the one Greek city of Barca."¹ When, however, they had passed through the town, and were encamped upon the hill of Lycæan Jove, it repented them that they had not seized Cyréné, and they endeavoured to enter it a second time. The Cyrenæans, however, would not suffer this; whereupon, though no one appeared to offer them battle, yet a panic came upon the Persians, and they ran a distance of full sixty furlongs before they pitched their camp. Here as they lay, a messenger came to them from Aryandes, ordering them home. Then the Persians besought the men of Cyréné to give them provisions for the way, and, these consenting, they set off on their return to Egypt. But the Libyans now beset them, and, for the sake of their clothes and harness, slew all who dropped behind and straggled, during the whole march homewards.

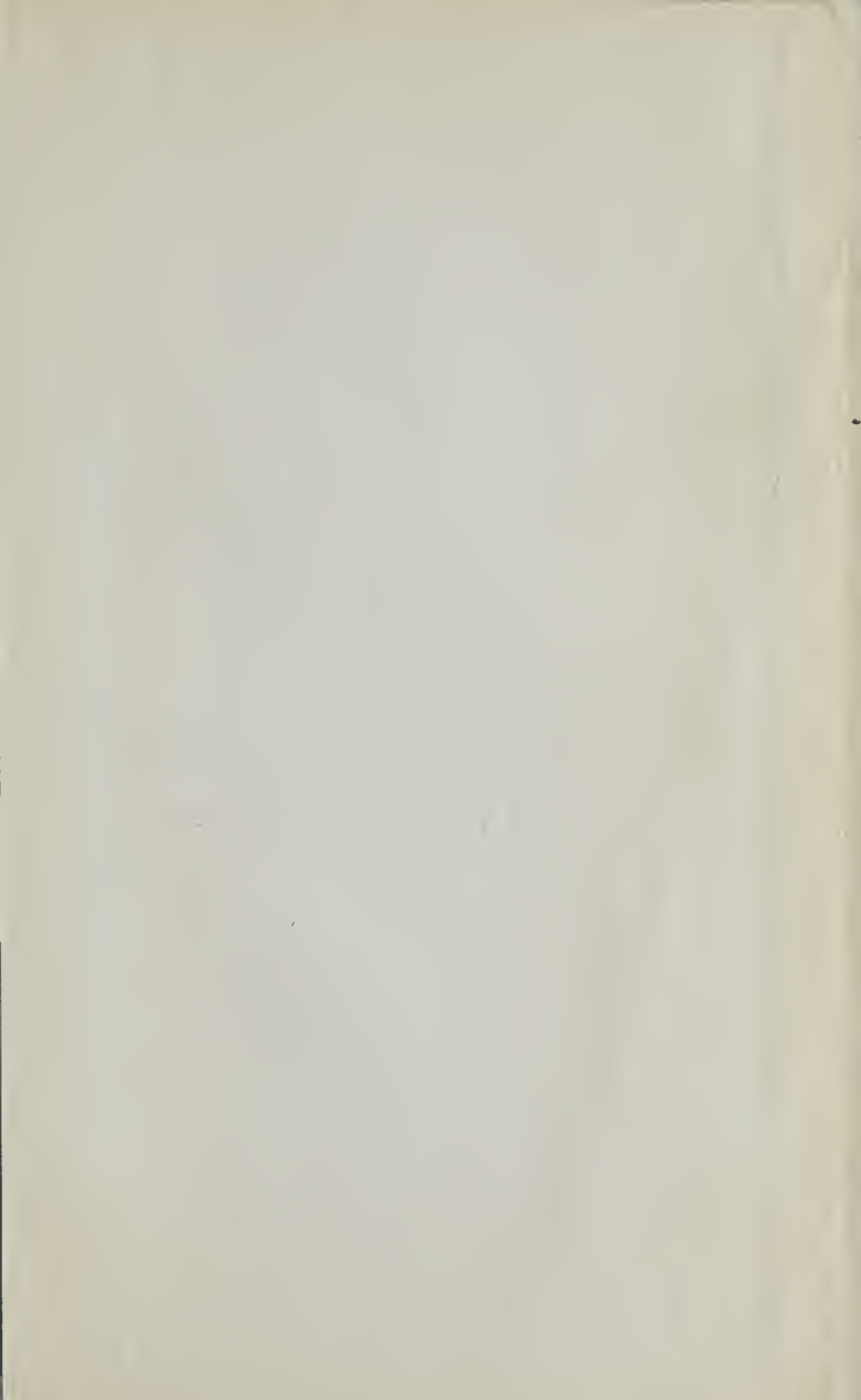
204. The furthest point of Libya reached by this Persian host was the city of Euesperides. The Barcæans carried into slavery were sent from Egypt to the king; and Darius assigned them a village in Bactria for their dwelling-place. To this village they gave the name of Barca, and it was to my time an inhabited place in Bactria.

205. Nor did Pheretima herself end her days happily. For on her return to Egypt from Libya, directly after taking vengeance on the people of Barca, she was overtaken by a most horrid death. Her body swarmed with worms, which ate her flesh while she was still alive.² Thus do men, by over-harsh punishments, draw down upon themselves the anger of the gods. Such then, and so fierce, was the vengeance which Pheretima, daughter of Battus, took upon the Barcæans.

¹ This whole account of the danger and escape of Cyréné is exceedingly improbable.

² The manner of her death cannot fail to recall the end of Herod Agrippa (Acts xii. 23).

END OF VOL. I.



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